DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 429 921 SO 030 784

AUTHOR	Schelander, Bjorn
TITLE	Singapore: A History of the Lion City.
INSTITUTION	Hawaii Univ., Honolulu. Center for Southeast Asian Studies.
SPONS AGENCY	Department of Education, Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	1998-00-00
NOTE	104p.; "With illustrations by Ann Hsu."
AVAILABLE FROM	Center for Southeast Asian Studies, School of Hawaiian, Asian and Pacific Studies, University of Hawaii, 1890 East-West Road, Moore Hall 412, Honolulu, HI 96822.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom - Learner (051) -- Historical Materials (060)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Area Studies; *Asian History; *Asian Studies; Foreign Countries; Global Education; Instructional Materials; Multicultural Education; *Non Western Civilization; Secondary Education; Social Studies
IDENTIFIERS	*Singapore

ABSTRACT

An overview of Singapore's history and culture is discussed in this learning guide. A study of the history of Singapore, including Temasek to Singapore, the Raffles Years, and the Straits Settlements, is given. Information about the transition of Singapore as a British Colony to the modern independent state of today, and the effects of World War II also is presented. Each chapter provides an overview, learning objectives, a timeline of important events, multiple choice questions, fill in the blanks, true or false statements, geography exercises, creative writing problems, questions for class discussion, and suggestions for further research. Chapters include: (1) "Early History of Singapore"; (2) "The Colonial Era"; and (3) "Independence." The book contains answer keys to chapter exercises and a 21-item bibliography. (BT)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 429 921

Singapore

A History of the Lion City

Bjorn Schelander

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Florence Lamoreux

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2B

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

SO 030 784

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

2

Singapore

A History of the Lion City

by

Bjorn Schelander

with illustrations by

Ann Hsu

Published by the
Center for Southeast Asian Studies
School of Hawaiian, Asian and Pacific Studies
University of Hawai'i
1998

Partially funded by the
U.S. Department of Education

Table of Contents

PREFACE i

Chapter One: Early History of Singapore 1
From Temasek to Singapore 2
Early Archeological Evidence 3
The Rise of Malacca 5
The Raffles Years 9
Thomas Stamford Raffles 9
British, Dutch, and Malay Relations 12
Raffles and the Founding of Singapore 14
Farquhar's Administration of Singapore 17
The Return of Raffles 20
The Straits Settlements 22
Consolidation of British Interests in the Malay Peninsula 24
Profits, Piracy, and Pepper 25
Timeline of Important Events 28
Exercises 29

Chapter Two: The Colonial Era 35
Singapore Becomes a Crown Colony 36
Development of Trade, Transportation, and Communication 36
A Multi-Ethnic Society 40
Syonan: Singapore and World War II 50
Prelude to War 50
Japanese Invasion of the Malay Peninsula 52
Singapore under Japanese Administration 54
Timeline of Important Events 57
Exercises 58

Chapter Three: Independence 63
The Post War Years 64
The Road to Independence 65
Lee Kuan Yew and the People's Action Party 66
Merger of Malaya and Singapore 68
An Independent Singapore 69
Economy 74
Government 77
International Relations 79
Security 81
Urban Development 82
Education 83
People 84
Looking to the Future 88
Timeline of Important Events 89
Exercises 90

KEY TO EXERCISES: 95

BIBLIOGRAPHY 101

Preface

What has allowed Singapore to become one of the most prosperous nations of Asia? In the years leading up to AD 2000, Singapore achieved a standard of living second only to Japan among the countries of Asia. It is a major financial, communications, and transportation center, with the world's busiest port. Yet the country has only 646 square kilometers of land, making it slightly smaller than the Hawaiian island of Molokai, and about one fifth the size of Rhode Island. (Singapore would fit more than 14,000 times over into the land area of the United States of America.) How did Singapore, with so few natural resources, become such an important international center? Some of the answers to this question may be found by examining Singapore's past.

The following chapters present an overview of the history of Singapore. Chapter one describes the island's ancient past, as well as the establishment of British influence under Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles of the English East India Company. Chapter two provides details of the British colonial presence up to and including World War II. Chapter three deals with the transition from colonial rule to independence, including Singapore's brief union with Malaysia, and concludes with a short survey of modern Singapore.

Chapter One: Early History of Singapore

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This chapter examines the presence of human settlements on the island of Singapore from ancient times up to the establishment of the British trading post there under the authority of the English East India Company (EIC). It recounts the story of an island that according to legend may have already achieved a reputation as a trading center in ancient times, but which later fell into relative obscurity until its meteoric rise to fame and prosperity under the guidance of Sir Thomas Raffles.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this chapter you should be able to describe the following topics:

- ✓ Evidence of early settlements on the island of Singapore
- ✓ The development of Malacca and its relationship to Singapore
- ✓ British and Dutch interests in and around the Malay peninsula
- ✓ Malay rulers of Johore and Singapore island
- ✓ The life and achievements of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles
- ✓ The founding of the British trading post at Singapore
- ✓ The development of Singapore within the Straits Settlements

From Temasek to Singapore

Singapore is a bustling, vibrant, modern city - a fast-paced urban nation where determination and energy are directed squarely toward the future. Gazing at the blocks of gleaming shopping malls and skyscrapers that cover much of today's Singapore, it can be difficult to find traces of the island's ancient history. This chapter will introduce the reader to some of the events that shaped Singapore's early past.

Much of the very earliest days of Singapore's history is known only by traveler's accounts or court inscriptions from other lands. Chinese, Thai, Malay, Javanese, Sumatran, and Indian sources, some dating back to the eleventh century, hint at events that involved Singapore. From these accounts we know that many kingdoms claimed ownership of Singapore (or Temasek, as it was formerly known) at different times in history. The area was included as part of the Buddhist Srivijayan empire, which ruled from its base in Palembang (on the nearby island of Sumatra) from the seventh to thirteenth centuries, and which extended over much of the Malay peninsula. The Indian king Raja Cholan, a Hindu, is said to have occupied Singapore briefly during the eleventh century after a series of raids on the Srivijaya. By the early fourteenth century the Thais had gained control of the island, but later were forced to give it up to the Majapahit rulers from Java. By the early sixteenth century Singapore had fallen under the influence of the new Islamic sultanate of Malacca. But while Malacca grew in fame and wealth as a major trading port, Singapore faded in importance. By the time the British arrived to set up a trading station in 1819, Singapore was a just a quiet fishing village. Aside from a fortification wall and a royal gravesite, there was hardly any visible evidence of Singapore's ancient history.

Early Archeological Evidence

The relatively few archeological remains that have been found in Singapore serve only to add to the sense of mystery concerning its past. Soon after the British arrived in Singapore in 1819, a large stone covered with ancient writings was discovered by the river. Munshi Abdullah, a Malay who was in Singapore when the stone was discovered, later wrote that it "was smooth, about six feet wide, square in shape, and its face was covered with a chiseled inscription.... Many learned men came and tried to read it.... However, not a single person in all Singapore was able to interpret the words." It was difficult to make out the stone's inscriptions, which had been worn almost smooth by time and weather. Sadly, the great rock was destroyed by a British engineer in 1843 doing work to clear the Singapore river. Only a few small fragments of the "Singapore Stone" remain, one of which is preserved in the Singapore National museum. It is thought that the writing is probably Javanese, dating back to the days when the Majapahit empire of Java ruled Singapore.

Other clues to Singapore's ancient past were unearthed in 1928, when workers discovered a set of gold jewelry, including rings and armbands, many of which were inlaid with diamonds and rubies. They were found on "Forbidden Hill" (so named because it was thought to be the site of ancient royal graves: later it was renamed Fort Canning Hill) at a place close to what was believed to be the tomb of the legendary ruler Iskandar Shah. The craftsmanship of the jewelry suggests that they are also probably Javanese relics of the Majapahit era.

These few treasures from Singapore's past provide a tantalizing glimpse at what life may have been like there in ancient times. Objects like the Singapore Stone and the old wall prompted scholars such as Thomas Raffles to conjure up romantic visions of a glorious past, when Singapore was a thriving city and center of trade and culture during the heyday of the early Hindu/Buddhist era of Southeast Asia. However, there is little evidence to confirm whether or not ancient Singapore was indeed such an important center of power. The records of early Singapore are scarce and inconclusive. It is only at the dawn of the fifteenth century, when nearby Malacca grew into a mighty kingdom, that we begin to have a clearer picture of Singapore's history.

A Land of Many Names

The island of Singapore has been known by many different names over the centuries. The ancient Javanese chronicle of 1365, the *Nagarakertagama*, refers to it as Temasek (sometimes also spelled "Tumasik"). By the fifteenth century the island was also known as Singapura, the Lion City, from the Malay words *singa* (lion) and *pura* (city). Legend states that a Sumatran prince, Sri Tri Buana, gave it that name when he came to the island in 1299 and saw a strange creature that he thought was a lion. (It is unlikely that there ever were lions in Singapore, though tigers roamed the island until the early twentieth century.)

After the British installed themselves on the island, "Singapura" became "Singapore." When control of the island was abruptly transferred to the Japanese during World War II, Singapore was renamed Syonan, or "Light of the South." After the war, the island was again known as Singapore (and its Malay equivalent, Singapura).

The Rise of Malacca

The founder of Malacca was a prince called Parameswara. He was a member of the royal family in Palembang on the island of Sumatra. Though he was married to a Majapahit princess, Parameswara tried to rebel against the Majapahit rulers of Java, who had long been rivals of the kingdom in Sumatra. Parameswara declared his independence from Java, and installed himself as king of the lion throne in Palembang. In retaliation, the Javanese soon drove Parameswara out from Palembang.

Parameswara fled to Temasek (Singapore), where he killed the local ruler and again installed himself as king. However, his rule in Singapore lasted only a few years, and ended when another army, probably under control of the Thais, drove him out of the city. This time Parameswara moved up the west coast of the Malay peninsula to Malacca, where he founded a new dynasty that was to dominate the trade of the region for the next century.

Once in Malacca, Parameswara took control and proceeded to develop the small village into a major commercial center. He did this by providing excellent facilities for the traders whose ships passed by the region. The city was well situated to take advantage of the substantial international trade that flowed throughout the region. Malacca was as far as the traders from India and from China could sail in one season of the monsoon winds. It was thus a convenient location for the merchants to meet and exchange goods, as well as to repair and resupply their ships before sailing back home on the next monsoon wind.

Malacca was soon a major trading venue for merchants from all over India, China, and Southeast Asia. By patrolling the waters to keep the area free from piracy and by providing good lodging, good docks, and a fair system of weights and measures, Malacca quickly grew to become a center for international trade.

From its founding around the year 1400, Malacca served as a major focal point for a wide network of trade that extended all the way from China to Europe. Europeans were eager to buy spices, such as cloves, cinnamon, nutmeg, and mace, for use as seasonings and as medicine. They also valued the high quality silks and other luxury goods from China. Venice served as the main European distribution center for these Asian products. Venice received its supplies from Arab traders, who in turn had bought their goods from Indian merchants. The Indians obtained most of their traded goods in Malacca, where they met with Chinese merchants and traders from the Indonesian islands.

During their first century of rule, the royal family of Malacca was able to exert a considerable amount of control over the smaller kingdoms and territories that bordered it on the lower Malay peninsula and across the straits on Sumatra. Singapore was just one of these lesser regions, and Malaccan influence was kept active there by the presence of one of the officials from the Malaccan court.

After just over one century of undisputed power, the Malaccan royal family was suddenly presented with a new threat. In 1511 the Portuguese Viceroy, Alfonso

d'Albuqueque, sailed into the port of Malacca at the head of a fleet of eighteen ships. D'Albuquerque's mission was not a friendly one. Two years earlier the first Portuguese trading expedition to reach Malacca had met with some trouble, and now the Portuguese had decided to capture the city and take over all of its profitable spice trade. Malacca was to be one more link in a chain of Portuguese trading outposts that spread from Europe to the coasts of Africa, the Arabian peninsula, India, and Southeast Asia. After fierce fighting, Malacca fell to the Portuguese.

Southeast Asia

The royal family of Malacca managed to escape the city and sought refuge at various locations in the Riau/Johore area between Malacca and Singapore. They established themselves as the rulers of Johore, though eventually their power was weakened by quarrels over succession and by intervention by the powerful Bugis community that arrived from Sulawesi to settle on the Malay peninsula. Singapore was dealt a severe blow when the Portuguese set fire to the city in 1613.

The Portuguese soon had their own problems. Both Asian and European countries were eager to control Malacca, and many attempts were made to take over the city. The Dutch finally succeeded in capturing the city in 1641. The Dutch remained in Malacca until 1795, when the French invasion of the Netherlands prompted the Dutch prince William V of Orange to flee to England and hand over Dutch overseas possessions to the British for safekeeping against the French. Thus the British were given temporary control of Malacca. They recognized Sultan Mahmud of Johore as the local ruler. When Mahmud died in 1813, there was a power struggle between his two sons. The younger son, Abdul Rahman, was supported by the Bugis and was installed as the new sultan. The older brother, Hussein, had some support from the local Malay community, but was left without power. While this was taking place, Malacca again changed hands, reverting from British to Dutch rule following the end of the Napoleonic Wars in Europe and Britain's return of the former Dutch possessions to the Netherlands. It was during this somewhat confusing situation that a small group of British ships sailed into Singapore harbor under the command of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles.

The Raffles Years

Thomas Raffles landed at Singapore on January 29, 1819. He was responsible for founding a trading center that would mark the beginning of Singapore's role as a valued and strategic British possession. It is typical of Raffles' energy, drive, and determination that he landed at Singapore, established the British claim to trade there, and sailed away within the short span of ten days. To understand how this happened, it is helpful to know something about the man himself, and about the relationships among the various European and Asian powers that were vying for control of the area.

Thomas Stamford Raffles

Thomas Raffles was a man of many talents. He was born to a family of very modest means and received only a very limited formal education, but through his own hard work and self-study he managed to become fluent in several languages and knowledgeable in a wide range of interests, including natural history, archeology, cartography, literature, history, science, music, and the arts. He pursued all of these interests while at the same time carrying out his duties as administrator in various British possessions, including (at different times) the island of Java, the west Sumatran port of Bencoolen (Bengkulu), and Singapore.

It is easy to romanticize Raffles' life. He was born in 1781 aboard a ship at sea, and from the age of fourteen worked as a clerk for the London office of the powerful English East India Company (EIC). After working at this post for ten years, he applied to transfer overseas

to become the assistant secretary to the Governor of Penang. During the six month voyage from London to Penang (located off the west coast of the Malay peninsula), Raffles taught himself Malay, an achievement that was rarely undertaken by the other British administrators of the region.

In Penang, Raffles soon distinguished himself as a hard worker, able administrator and tireless student of the local language, culture, and history. It was no doubt this set of accomplishments that led Lord Minto, the Governor-General of India, then a British colony, to choose Raffles as the man who would take command of the island of Java.

At this time, Java was in the hands of the Dutch. However, all overseas Dutch possessions were in a vulnerable state, due to the French conquest of Holland in the ongoing Napoleonic Wars. Fearing that the French would gain complete control of the Dutch possessions and thus threaten British overseas interests, Britain decided to take over the Dutch possessions herself. At this point the Dutch monarch, William of Orange, was still living in exile in England, while Louis Napolean (younger brother of Napolean Bonaparte) had assumed the title of king of Holland. The Dutch administration in Java was led by Herman Daendels, a supporter of the French-backed regime in Holland.

In 1811 the British invaded Java, the headquarters of the Dutch possessions in Southeast Asia. Raffles was appointed to rule as Lieutenant-Governor of Java and its dependencies. He introduced numerous administrational reforms, all the while increasing his knowledge of the local peoples' customs, history, and beliefs, as well as of the geography and natural history of the area.

Shortly before Java was returned to the Dutch in 1816 at the conclusion of the wars in

Europe, Raffles returned to England. He published his encyclopedic work, *History of Java* in April, 1817, and was knighted shortly thereafter. He then returned to Southeast Asia as Lieutenant-Governor of the small British post at Bencoolen, on the west coast of Sumatra. While in Bencoolen, Raffles was energetic in seeking ways for the British to gain more influence in the region. The Dutch and the British were once again commercial rivals in Southeast Asia, and Raffles was concerned that Britain needed to act decisively to avoid being outmaneuvered by the Dutch. In 1818 he finally succeeded in arranging a meeting in Calcutta with the Governor-General of India, the Marquis of Hastings, to discuss plans for increasing the British presence around the Straits of Malacca. He received approval from Hastings to go to Aceh (an independent kingdom occupying the northern tip of Sumatra) to secure a treaty for British trade. He was also given authorization to establish a post in Riau, Johore or some other point further south than the Dutch-controlled area around Malacca.

British, Dutch, and Malay Relations

Though Raffles had permission to seek a British foothold in the southern area of the Straits of Malacca, he had been given strict orders not to antagonize the Dutch. The British had been allies of the Dutch during the Napoleonic Wars. After the French invaded his country in 1795, the king of Holland, William of Orange, fled to England for safety. Here he signed an agreement known as the Kew Letters, authorizing the British to take control of Dutch foreign possessions for the duration of the war. Once peace was restored, the agreement stipulated that the territories were to be returned to the Dutch. This process was started in 1802 under the Treaty of Amiens, but when Napolean resumed war in Europe and placed his brother on the throne of Holland, Britain once more began to take possession of Dutch overseas interests. Towards the end of the Napoleanic wars Britain renewed its commitment to hand back control of the Dutch possessions once the French threat had been eliminated. Thus Britain was eventually required to return control of Java, Malacca, and other strategic holdings in the Malay Archipelago to the Dutch.

The end of the European wars signaled a resumption of the British and Dutch competition in the profitable Asian trade. Both countries had been rivals in this area for over two centuries. The English had founded the East India Company (EIC) in 1600 to facilitate trade with the spice islands and other Asian ports. The EIC was given a royal charter and the right of a monopoly of British trade in the countries from Africa to Asia. Two years later the Dutch founded their own United East India Company, the *Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie* (VOC). Both companies were motivated by the potential profits to be made by participating in the flourishing Southeast Asian trade in spices and Chinese and Indian goods.

By the early nineteenth century, Britain dominated the Indian subcontinent while the Dutch were the major European influence in the "East Indies" (the islands of what is today called Indonesia). The two spheres of influence met and clashed at the strategic Straits of Malacca. The British had control of Penang at the north end of the Straits. However, the areas below Penang were mostly under Dutch influence on both sides of the Straits. In 1818 the Dutch were again in control of Malacca and much of the east coast and southern areas of Sumatra, and also claimed the areas of Riau and Johore.

Control of the Straits of Malacca was important for both sides. The longstanding trade linking India and China to Southeast Asia relied on safe passage through the Straits. Britain was eager to obtain Chinese tea (Britain imported an estimated 23 million pounds of Chinese tea by 1800), as well as silk and other goods. Britain therefore viewed the Straits as a vital passage way from India for her China-bound trading ships. The Dutch also viewed the Straits of Malacca as an important shipping lane. For the Dutch, control of the Straits provided revenue from the taxes collected on goods passing through their ports. The Straits also provided a trading area in which the Dutch could sell the goods from their Indonesian island possessions.

Relations between the European powers and the local rulers varied greatly. At times, agreements were established to the mutual benefit of both sides. However, both European and local authorities were occasionally guilty of not honoring their agreements with each other. Further complications arose when the British and Dutch attempted to lure local rulers to shift their allegiance from one European power to the other. The presence of the Bugis community also provided room for further intrigue as they competed for power with the local Malays.

The Bugis were known as a brave and powerful group well skilled in war, sailing, trading, and piracy. When the Dutch captured the Bugis headquarters of Makassar on the island of Sulawesi in 1667, many Bugis fled to other points in the Malay archipelago. One such family was that of the prince Daing Rilaka. Three of his five sons became rulers in Johore, while another son became a raja on the island of Borneo. Tension developed between the newly arrived Bugis and local Malay rulers, as well as with the Minangkabau community (originally from west Sumatra), who had also established themselves on the Malay peninsula. With all these different Asian and European rivals for power, it is not surprising that wars, broken treaties, and new alliances were commonplace.

Raffles and the Founding of Singapore

Raffles' plan to establish a British settlement in the southern part of the Straits of Malacca was part of this ongoing scheming for power in the region. After obtaining initial permission for his plan from Governor-General Hastings in Calcutta, Raffles set sail for Penang on December 7, 1818. There he enlisted the aid of Colonel William Farquhar, who had served for more than two decades on the Malay peninsula, including fifteen years as Resident of Malacca. Farquhar set sail down the Straits toward the Carimon islands to scout for possible settlement sites, while Raffles prepared to visit northern Sumatra to work out a treaty with the Acehnese.

Raffles was prevented from sailing to Aceh by the Governor of Penang, James Bannerman. Fearing that Raffles was moving too quickly and without proper authority, Bannerman asked Raffles to postpone his trip to Aceh until clarification of his duties was received from the EIC officials in Calcutta. Not one to be excluded from adventure, Raffles

slipped out of port the next night (without informing Bannerman), and hurried to catch up with Farquhar further down the Straits.

After Raffles had already left Penang, instructions arrived from Hastings in Calcutta to cancel the whole expedition. Hastings had just been informed of new Dutch claims of treaties in the Riau/Johore region. Not wanting to antagonize the Dutch, who were considered potential allies in any European conflicts that might develop, the British wanted time to consider the new Dutch claims. The London office also sent orders to stop Raffles, but they too arrived after Raffles was already gone. Raffles succeeded in sailing to Singapore only because of the long time lag between the sending of a message from headquarters and its arrival in the field.

On the afternoon of January 28, 1819, Raffles and Farquhar arrived at Singapore harbor. The next day they went ashore to meet with the Temenggong [an official of the Malay court], Abdul Rahman. The Temenggong was the ruler of the small fishing village that existed around the mouth of the Singapore river. Wary of exceeding his authority (and incurring the possible anger of his superior, the Sultan of Johore), the Temenggong claimed that he did not have the power to sign a treaty with the British.

Farquhar and Raffles realized that they might use the troubles and succession disputes of the Johore sultanate to their advantage. It may be recalled that the previous Sultan of Johore, Mahmud, had died leaving two sons (by commoner wives) as the only heirs to the throne. The Bugis had supported the younger son, who was then installed as the new sultan, and recognized as such by the Dutch. The older son, Hussein, was left to settle down in Riau.

Raffles decided to cover all bases by both sending Farquhar to request talks with the new sultan and by sending word to the older brother, Hussein. Not surprisingly, Farquhar was unsuccessful in reaching an agreement with the current sultan, who was allied with the Dutch. However, Raffles was able to persuade Hussein to come to Singapore, where he was recognized as the 'true' Sultan of Johore in exchange for allowing the British a base in Singapore.

On February 6, 1819, a ceremony was held for the signing of the new treaty. Hussein, now known as Sultan Hussein Mohammed Shah of Johore, was guaranteed an annual income of 5,000 Spanish dollars (the most widely traded currency of the region), and Abdul Rahman, the Temenggong of Singapore, was to be given an annual payment of 3,000 Spanish dollars. In return, the British had the right to establish a trading post on the island, and were assured that no other Western power would be allowed to establish settlements on the island. Well pleased with his success, Raffles set sail the following day, leaving Farquhar behind to administer the new settlement.

Lost Chances

The founding of modern Singapore is one of Raffles' best known accomplishments. But he was not the first British official to have had the chance to develop Singapore. In 1703 the Sultan of Johore, Abdu'l Jalil, reportedly offered Singapore as a gift to an English captain, Alexander Hamilton. Had he realized the potential of the area and taken steps to establish a post on the island, Hamilton might have founded a British presence there over one hundred years before Raffles' arrival. However Hamilton saw little sense in taking the swampy and forested island. He turned down the Sultan's offer.

Farquhar's Administration of Singapore

While many histories of Singapore rightfully claim that Raffles was the driving force behind the creation of a British settlement at Singapore, fewer point out that Raffles had little to do with the early day-to-day administration of the town. Farquhar was left with instructions to build up the settlement and to encourage passing ships to stop there for trade and supplies. Raffles continued to send instructions to Farquhar from his post in Bencoolen, but communication between the two was erratic. Requests to Raffles for guidance sometimes went unanswered for many months. Willingly or not, Farquhar was often forced to make his own decisions on how to administer the town.

Life in the new settlement was full of challenges. The existing houses were all small wooden buildings with *atap* (thatched palm frond) roofs, and at first the new houses that were built also followed this method of construction. While this style of house was airy and therefore well suited to the warm climate, it provided only moderate protection from some of the island's less welcome inhabitants, such as the enormous numbers of large rats that roamed the village. Farquhar dealt with the problem by offering a small payment for each dead rat that was brought in. Hundreds were caught every day, and huge trenches had to be dug to bury the animals. Later an infestation of giant centipedes was dealt with in a similar fashion.

Other larger animals were also present on the island, and posed a danger to life in the settlement. Tigers roamed the forests outside the town. As more of the tigers' habitat (and therefore source of food) was destroyed by people clearing the land, there was a corresponding increase in the number of tiger attacks on humans. Other wildlife posed less of

a direct threat, but could still be dangerous. Once, while walking his dog by the river, Farquhar turned around just in time to see the unfortunate dog being swept away by a crocodile.

Legacy of Piracy

Gruesome sights were commonplace in the early days of the settlement. Farquhar soon found that there were many human skulls rolling up along the beach. As recorded by Munshi Abdullah, there were hundreds of such skulls, "some old, some new, some with hair still sticking to them." It was discovered that these were the remains of sailors and merchants who had been killed by pirates. (While some of the inhabitants of the village at Singapore were quiet fisherfolk, others lived by plundering passing ships.) Realizing that sailors could hardly be expected to land at the harbor while these unpleasant reminders of previous pirate raids were still in plain view , Farquhar quickly had the unwelcome skulls removed.

Farquhar was also faced with external threats to the settlement. The Dutch protested the British claim to Singapore, and could easily have captured the weakly defended town if they had tried. Luckily for Farquhar, the long exchange of messages between the British and Dutch authorities gave time for the settlement to become more established. The British merchants in India were quick to applaud the new outpost, which was growing rapidly and had already begun to prove its value as a trading center. Less than two months after the British arrived in Singapore, there were scores of small Malay and Indonesian boats in the harbor, and a few European trading ships had already docked there. Soon the authorities in London realized that Singapore's strategic location and potential for profit would justify some inconvenience and haggling with the Dutch.

One reason for Singapore's rapid growth was the fact that it was a tax-free port. Raffles had instituted this practice as an incentive for merchants to use the harbor, and thereafter generations of resident traders were to view it as an almost sacred policy. This made Singapore a much more inviting place for traders to land than the Dutch ports in the Straits, where high taxes and harbor fees were imposed.

Raffles returned to Singapore for another whirlwind visit four months after signing the original treaty. He was well pleased with the progress of what he called "my new Colony" and claimed that during his short absence the population had grown to 5000 (estimates put the population of Singapore at the time of the Raffles' first landing at about 1000). Though he only stayed in Singapore for one month, Raffles worked with characteristic energy and enthusiasm, arranging further concessions from the Sultan and the Temenggong, and drawing up plans for the new city.

Singapore continued to prosper under Farquhar's residency. The many settlers who had come in the early days from Malacca were now supplemented by Malays, Bugis, Chinese, Indians and Arabs from all over the region. Yet while many individual merchants made their own private fortunes, Farquhar had difficulty raising money to pay for the administration of the town. As he was forbidden from raising revenue by taxing trade, Farquhar resorted to a "tax-farming" system in which he sold the rights to control monopolies on gambling and the sale of opium and *arrack* (a local alcoholic drink). Those who bought the rights to these monopolies paid the government a fixed annual sum. It is perhaps ironic that Farquhar had to derive money from legalized gambling and the sale of opium to finance expenditures for the public good, such as the establishment in 1820 of a police force.

The Return of Raffles

Raffles returned for one final visit to Singapore in 1822. He was dismayed at some of Farquhar's policies, including the legalization of gambling and the lack of effort to outlaw slavery or cock-fighting. For the rest of his eight month stay, Raffles continued work to improve the city.

Raffles divided the town into separate areas for each of the major ethnic groups, including the Malays, Chinese, Indians, and Europeans. Each of the Asian groups was to have a leader, or *kapitan*, who would keep order within his group and serve as a liaison for his community. Within the commercial district, the streets were laid out in an orderly fashion, and the old wooden buildings were replaced with more permanent (and more fireproof) buildings of brick and tile. Difficulties in carrying out the plan were tackled with ingenuity and determination. When it was argued that land on one side of the river was too marshy for commercial development, a nearby hill was leveled and its earth transferred to fill in the muddy area.

Raffles took other steps to improve the condition of his beloved Singapore, which he once referred to as his "almost only child.' Slavery was outlawed and the gambling dens were shut down. All landholdings had to be registered. Magistrates were appointed from the community of private British citizens to assist in administering the law, though serious cases were referred to the Resident or to the authorities in Penang or India.

Raffles also was interested in the scientific and educational development of his community. He established a botanical garden, and was himself a keen collector of specimens of local flora and fauna. He also raised money for the establishment of the Singapore

Institution, which he envisioned as a school with the dual purpose of training local teachers and civil servants and of promoting European knowledge of the local languages, literature and culture.

Another achievement was the signing of a new agreement with the Sultan and the Temenggong. Under the new treaty of 1823, all land not personally held by the Sultan or the Temenggong was to be 'at the entire disposal of the British Government.' (Previously, the British were merely given rights to develop a trading post on the stretch of land near the mouth of the Singapore river.)

During his last visit to Singapore, Raffles began to quarrel with his old friend Farquhar. Their disagreements led Raffles to request that Farquhar resign. The two men, who had accomplished so much together, left on bitter terms. Farquhar's replacement, John Crawfurd, arrived in May, 1823. Raffles left three weeks later, never to return to Singapore.

Disaster Befalls Raffles

Sadly, Raffles was to suffer near tragedy on his way home to England. After leaving Singapore, Raffles returned briefly to Bencoolen to pack up his belongings. Soon after leaving the port of Bencoolen, his ship caught fire. Though he and his family were able to escape with their lives, all of their possessions were lost. The collection of papers and scientific specimens which sank to the bottom of the sea was priceless. Raffles had recorded and accumulated a vast store of information on the islands of the Malay archipelago: according to Raffles the collection filled one hundred and twenty-two cases. Included in the lost cargo were precious manuscripts, translations of local books, dictionaries and vocabulary lists, detailed maps, extensive research notes, draft versions of histories of many of the important Indonesian islands, over 2000 scientific illustrations of Southeast Asian flora and fauna, and numerous specimens (both live and preserved) of local plants, birds, and animals. The loss was incalculable: the results of more than a decade of meticulous study and research were lost forever.

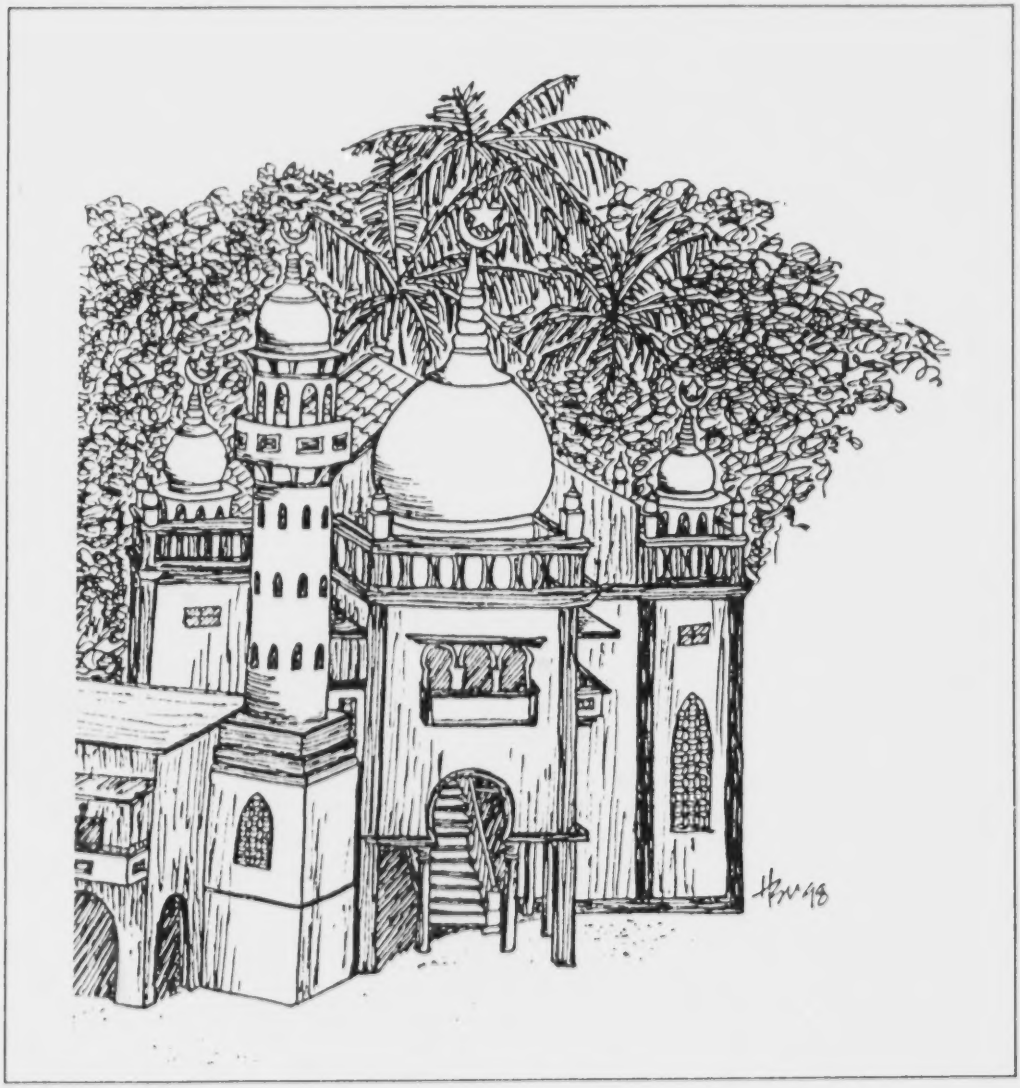
The Straits Settlements

John Crawfurd assumed control of Singapore in mid-1823. Like Raffles, Crawfurd had begun his overseas career with the EIC in Penang, and he had served under Raffles in Java. He had also visited Siam (Thailand) and Cochin-China (Indochina). Though he was often considered a somewhat brusque personality, he was also a pragmatic administrator who generally supported the interests of the business community.

As Resident of Singapore, Crawfurd continued many, but not all, of Raffles' policies. For example, Singapore remained free of import and export taxes, and Crawfurd even abolished port dues, such as anchorage charges. However, Crawfurd was less supportive of Raffles' plan for introducing higher education, and the half-built structure of the Singapore Institution remained unfinished for many years, looking oddly like ruins near the otherwise bustling harbor area. Crawfurd also felt that Raffles' attempt to ban gambling could never be enforced, so he decided to let the government derive some profit from it by reopening and taxing the gambling dens.

With an eye for administrative detail, Crawfurd began to keep more accurate government records than his predecessors. He noted that in the three years of the settlement's existence before his arrival "no attempt was made at an estimate of the amount of trade carried on." To remedy the situation, he recorded that during 1823 (his first year as Resident), the value of exports was put at over five and one half million Spanish dollars. In 1824 he conducted the first official census of Singapore, which revealed that the city had grown to include nearly 11,000 inhabitants. In addition to these local efforts to provide a more detailed

and orderly administration, a number of more far-reaching events occurred that affected the status of the British presence in Singapore.



One of the early mosques built in Singapore.

Consolidation of British Interests in the Malay Peninsula

In 1824, the British and Dutch authorities signed the Treaty of London. This document settled many of the longstanding disputes over each side's territorial claims in Southeast Asia. The agreement outlined the respective spheres of influence that the two countries were to have in the region: in effect the Dutch were to control the areas below the Straits of Malacca and the British were to have the area above the Straits. The Dutch finally acknowledged British authority in Singapore, and also gave the British rights to Malacca. In return, the British turned over their post in Bencoolen to the Dutch, and agreed not to interfere with Dutch activity in Sumatra. British authority in Singapore was now uncontested.

Later that same year a revised treaty was negotiated in Singapore with the Sultan and the Temenggong. Under this agreement, the EIC was given permanent title to Singapore and all the islands within ten miles of the Singapore coastline. In return, the Sultan and Temenggong were given increased allowances. While the earlier agreement of 1823 had allowed the British extensive rights to develop the island, it was not until the treaty of 1824 that the local rulers ceded "in full sovereignty and property, to the Honorable English East India Company, their heirs and successors for ever, the island of Singapore." Thus Singapore formally became a British possession one year after Raffles's last visit to the island.

Now that local and international recognition of British authority over Singapore was put on paper, the EIC consolidated its possessions on the Malay peninsula by uniting them into one administrative unit. In 1826 the holdings at Penang, Malacca, and Singapore were joined to become the "Straits Settlements." The capital of the Straits Settlements was located in Penang, with ultimate authority subject to EIC control in India.

Profits, Piracy, and Pepper

During the first fifty years of the Straits Settlements, Singapore continued to rely on trade as her main source of profits. In addition to the British ships of the EIC, hundreds of Malay and Indonesian craft visited the port every year. Among the most impressive of these were the colorful Bugis ships that sailed from Sulawesi and other ports in eastern Indonesia to arrive in Singapore during September or October. From November to March the northeast monsoons brought junks from Siam (Thailand), Indochina, and China. At times, Singapore harbor was filled with hundreds of ships of all descriptions, reflecting Singapore's almost total dependence on international trade.

Singapore Trade:

The following items were listed in the Produce Market Report from *The Singapore Chronicle* of December 9,1824. They illustrate the great diversity of products to be found in the city five years after its founding by Thomas Raffles.

BIRDS NEST	MUSKETS
CAMPHIRE	MOTHER OF PEARL
COFFEE	NANKEENS
CASSIA *Lignea*	OIL *Cocoa nut*
COPPER *Japan*	OPIUM *Turkey*
COTTON *Bengal*	PEPPER
DRAGONS BLOOD	RATTANS
ELEPHANS TEETH	RICE *Siam & Bengal*
FLINTS	SAGO *Pearl*
GAMBIER	SILK *raw Canton no.3*
GUNNIES	SAPAN WOOD
IRON	STEEL
LEAD	SALT

Note: "dragons blood" is a dark red palm resin used in varnish and other products. Cassia is a type of cinnamon. Nankeens are trousers made of *nankeen* cloth, a yellowish brown cotton fabric from China. Use a dictionary or encyclopedia to find descriptions of other unfamiliar items.

Lingering problems with piracy sometimes threatened Singapore's prosperous trade. The numerous small islands, inlets and coves around the Malay peninsula close to Singapore provided shelter to the *orang laut* [literally, "sea people"] who often attacked passing ships. Even pirates from as far away as the Sulu Archipelago and Mindanao preyed on ships bound for Singapore. Despite an article in the 1824 treaty requiring both the British and the Malay

leaders of Singapore to "use every means within their power respectively for the suppression of robbery and piracy within the Straits of Malacca," it was commonly believed that the Temenggong of Singapore supported some of the pirates in return for a share of the stolen loot. Increased British patrols eventually helped curb the problem, especially with the deployment of modern and maneuverable steamships and gunboats.

Though trade continued to be central to Singapore's economy, occasional efforts were made to develop local industry. As early as the days of Crawfurd's administration, Singapore had become a center for the processing of sago. The pith of the sago plant was grated, rinsed with water, and drained to leave behind a starchy paste which could be used to bake various types of bread or biscuits. Sago had long been used as a staple food in many areas of island Southeast Asia, and was especially important as an alternative food source in areas which were not suited for rice cultivation. While most of the raw sago processed in Singapore was imported from Sumatra or other nearby islands, a number of attempts were made to cultivate local agricultural products, such as nutmeg and sugar, for the export market. Few of these ventures ended with much success, except for a number of Chinese plantations that produced pepper and gambier, (gambier is a resinous substance used in tanning and dyeing). Production of pepper and gambier tapered off after reaching a peak in the 1840s. Many of the plantation owners abandoned their old plots after the soil was depleted, and cleared new areas of forest to plant the next round of crops. In this way much of the forest was destroyed, and the old fields were left unsuitable for further farming. Eventually agriculture faded in importance, as plantation owners returned to find work in the town or moved on to new lands on the Malay peninsula.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, Singapore had grown far beyond its humble beginnings as a sleepy little fishing village a few decades before. Between 1824 and 1836 the population nearly tripled to more than 30,000, and soared to over 80,000 by 1860. In addition to the British and Chinese merchant houses, the central business district was also home to new trading companies owned by Arabs, Jews, Armenians, Portuguese, Germans, and Indians. Funds were raised to finally complete the Singapore Institution (later to be renamed the Raffles Institution), where education was offered in the English, Malay, Tamil, and various Chinese languages. In 1832, the capital of the Straits Settlements was transferred from Penang to Singapore.

Timeline of Important Events

late 1300's	Paremswara settles in Temasik (Singapore). He later moves to Malacca to escape the invading Siamese forces.
1400-1500	Golden age of Malacca as a trading entrepôt.
1511	Portuguese seize Malacca.
1600	British establish East India Company (EIC).
1602	Dutch establish United East India Company (VOC).
1613	Singapore burned by the Portuguese.
1641	Dutch take control of Malacca.
1786	Sir Francis Light takes possession of Penang for Britain.
1795	Malacca transferred from Dutch to British.
1811	Raffles appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Java.
1819	Raffles signs treaty with Sultan Hussein of Johore and Temenggong Abdul Rahman of Singapore to allow British to establish a trading post in Singapore.
1819-1823	Farquhar in charge of British settlement in Singapore (reporting to Raffles in Bencoolen). Singapore thrives as a duty-free trading port.
1823	Raffles oversees transition of Singapore's administration from Farquhar to Crawfurd, then returns to England (and dies there three years later).
1824	Dutch formally recognize British rights to Singapore under Treaty of London.
1826	Penang, Malacca, and Singapore joined to form Straits Settlements.
1825	Value of Singapore's trade double that of Penang and Malacca combined.
1832	Singapore becomes administrative headquarters of Straits Settlements.
1860	Singapore's population exceeds 80,000.

Exercises

I Multiple Choice:

Beside each of the following questions, write the letter of the option that provides the best answer.

1) __ According to legend, the Sumatran prince Parameswara stayed in Singapore for several years before founding the city of:

   a) Palembang
   b) Malacca
   c) Bencoolen
   d) Penang

2) __ Singapore has been called all of the following **except**:

   a) Temasek
   b) Singapura
   c) Syonan
   d) Salang

3) __ The first European powers to take control of Malacca were the:

   a) Dutch
   b) British
   c) Portuguese
   d) French

4) __ Raffles established a British trading post at Singapore:

   a) before the British had established a base in Penang.
   b) after Raffles had served as Lieutenant-Governor of Java
   c) before the Dutch had taken Malacca
   d) after the Treaty of London formally recognized British rights to the area

5) __ From 1819 to 1823 the British representative living in Singapore who was responsible for the day-to-day administration of the town was:

a) Raffles
b) Bannerman
c) Crawfurd
d) Farquhar

6) __ The Straits Settlements consisted of:

a) Singapore and Malacca
b) Singapore, Malacca, Penang, and Johore
c) Singapore, Malacca, and Penang
d) Singapore, Penang, and Bencoolen

7) __ Which of the following groups did **not** play a direct, significant role in developments on the Malay peninsula?

a) the Bugis
b) the Dutch
c) the British
d) the Spanish

8) __ Which of the following was a significant problem during Singapore's early years?

a) Singapore's poor location at the mouth of the Straits of Malacca
b) continued problems with nearby piracy
c) unfavorable monsoon winds
d) disagreements between the British and Sultan Hussein of Johore.

9) __ The keenest supporter of higher education in early Singapore (and the founder of the Singapore Institution) was:

a) Crawfurd
b) Sultan Hussein
c) Raffles
d) Farquhar

10) __ Raffles designated separate areas of the city for all of the following ethnic groups **except**:

a) The Chinese
b) the Malays
c) the Thai
d) the Indians

II True or False:

Place a "T" (for true) or "F" (for false) next to each of the following statements.

1) ___ During the fifteenth century, Singapore was a much more important center of trade than Malacca.

2) ___ After the Portuguese captured Malacca in 1511, the royal family fled to the Riau/Johore area.

3) ___ The chance to obtain spices was a major factor prompting Portuguese interest in the trade that passed through the Straits of Malacca.

4) ___ After the defeat of the Portuguese, the British were the only European power to maintain a presence in Malacca and the rest of the Malay peninsula.

5) ___ The Bugis were traders who often visited Malay ports, but never got involved in Malay politics.

6) ___ After obtaining rights to Singapore in 1819, Raffles spent more time at the British outpost of Bencoolen than he did in Singapore.

7) ___ A major factor in Singapore's success was its status as a tax-free trading port.

8) ___ Pepper and gambier were two of the main local agricultural products to be cultivated in Singapore during the early years of the British administration.

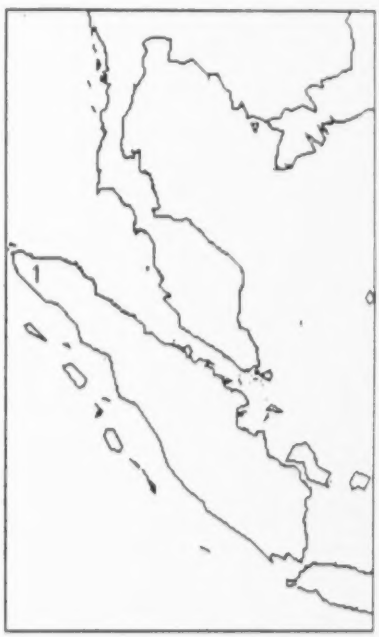
9) ___ Britain retained a large share of the profitable trade flowing through Singapore by banning all other European powers from using the port.

10) ___ Despite Singapore's commercial success, the small size of the island limited population growth to only a few thousand during the first three decades of British rule.

III Geography Knowledge

Fill in the name of each place next to its description below. Then write the corresponding number from each of the following descriptions at its correct position on the map below.

The first question has been completed as an example.



1) Aceh — The area in north Sumatra where Raffles had originally intended to go in 1811 to negotiate a treaty for a possible British settlement.

2) _____ — The place where both Raffles and Crawfurd had their first overseas posting.

3) _____ — The place whose name means "Lion City."

4) _____ — The Sumatran port from which Raffles also oversaw the early development of Singapore.

5) _____ — The island which Raffles administered as Lt.-Governor from 1811-1815.

6) _____ — The city that legend states was founded by Parameswara: later to be controlled in succession by the Portuguese, Dutch, and British.

7) _____ — The waterway which provided a major thoroughfare for international trade flowing through Southeast Asia: named after one of the important trading ports on the Malay coast.

8) _____ — The country then known as Siam.

9) _____ — The area at the tip of the Malay peninsula which was ruled by the former royal family of Malacca: Mahmud was one of its Sultans.

10) _____ — The island that was the original homeland of the Minangkabau: also home to the ancient Srivijayan capital of Palembang.

IV Questions for Debate

Form teams to argue for or against the following propositions.

1) "Farquhar's views on allowing gambling, drugs, and prostitution were more realistic than those of Raffles. Rather than attempting to ban vices, Farquhar raised money for the administration by taxing gambling dens and the sale of opium and alcohol. Since vices will always exist, it is better for the government to play an active role in controlling and taxing them rather than driving them underground."

2) "Raffles was wise to designate separate areas of Singapore for the major ethnic groups, since new immigrants could find support from within their respective communities and each major group had a 'kapitan' to represent them in dealings with the British."

V Creative Writing

1) Imagine that you are Thomas Raffles. The year is 1824 and you have just returned to England after nearly twenty years of service in Southeast Asia. Write a short passage for your memoirs describing the accomplishments of which you feel most proud. Utilize your knowledge of Raffles' activities and interests, and use your imagination to fill in details.

2) You have just arrived in Singapore from China to seek your fortune. Write a letter home describing your impressions of the city, including living conditions, work and leisure activities, and the numbers and types of other residents, etc.

3) You are the Temenggong of Singapore, and the British have just signed an agreement with you and Sultan Hussein for the right to establish a trading post on Singapore. Outline your impressions of how this turn of events will affect you and the inhabitants of your island. Include any concerns you may have about your future relations with the Dutch in Malacca and the new role that the British will have in your town.

Chapter Two: The Colonial Era

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This chapter describes the development of Singapore as a British colony. The city quickly grew into a cosmopolitan center that became a land of opportunity for a unique mix of people from China, India, the Malay peninsula, the nearby Indonesian islands, and Europe. Singapore soon became the star of Britain's possessions in Southeast Asia, and became a major international trading center. However, the race towards increasing prosperity was shattered by the events of World War II, which also paved the way for the eventual end of the British colonial presence.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this chapter you should be able to describe the following topics:

- ✓ How Singapore became a British crown colony
- ✓ The importance of trade in the development of Singapore
- ✓ Advances in transportation and communications in the colony
- ✓ The multi-ethnic composition of Singapore's population
- ✓ The beginning of war in the Pacific during WWII
- ✓ The reasons for the British defeat in Malaya and Singapore
- ✓ The Japanese administration in Singapore during WWII

Singapore Becomes a Crown Colony

From the time of its founding under Raffles, Singapore had been subject to authority of the British administration in India. At first this meant control from the offices of the East India Company (EIC). When the EIC was dissolved in 1858, control of Singapore and the rest of the Straits Settlements was transferred to the India Office. As Singapore grew larger and more important, many of its inhabitants sought to be free of interference from the British authorities in India. The former Resident of Singapore, John Crawfurd, was among those who supported the idea of Singapore being administered directly from London.

In 1867, the Straits Settlements became a crown colony, subject to control by the Colonial Office in London. The Straits Settlements administration consisted of a Governor (appointed from London), an Executive Council, and a Legislative Council. At first, all members of the Legislative Council were European, but after two years the first Asian member was appointed. Over time, the number of members in the Legislative Council increased, and a fixed number of positions were allotted for Chinese, Indian, Malay, and Eurasian representatives. Despite increased representation, the council was still subject to the decisions of the Governor, who had the power to approve or veto all legislation.

Development of Trade, Transportation, and Communication

Trade: During her early days as a trading port, Singapore was a center for exchanging goods from Southeast Asia, India, and China. In the 1860's, a visiting British scientist, Dr. C. Collingwood, noted that Bugis ships from Sulawesi still sometimes called at Singapore with cargoes of "gold-dust, tortoise-shells, ambergris, pearls, birds-nests, turtles' eggs, sharks' fins, trepang, mother-of-pearl shells, and other curiosities of Eastern commerce." But

increasingly Singapore grew prosperous as a center for selling raw materials from the Malay peninsula, especially rubber and tin.

The Malay peninsula had large deposits of tin. As the process of canning goods became more common, demand for tin increased. Thousands of Chinese immigrants arrived in Singapore on their way to work in the tin mines on the peninsula. Singapore became a major center for smelting and selling tin from the peninsula.

The peninsula also began producing large amounts of rubber. As early as 1877, rubber trees (which were native to South America) were introduced to Singapore on an experimental basis at the Botanic Gardens. It was not until twenty years later that Henry Ridley, the new director of the Botanic Gardens, developed the herringbone pattern of tapping rubber trees that allowed continuous collection of sap without damaging the tree. Initially greeted with skepticism, the director was soon known as "Mad Ridley" for his enthusiastic but largely vain attempts to promote the idea of rubber cultivation. Plantation owners started to take notice of Ridley's ideas when the worldwide demand for rubber suddenly increased. The rapidly growing automobile industry in the early twentieth century required rubber for tires, and soon many rubber plantations appeared on the Malay peninsula to meet the demand. Singapore became the major export center for most of this rubber from the peninsula.

Singapore also became a processing and storage center for oil and coal. Steamships used Singapore as a refueling center to restock their supplies of coal. As oil was discovered on Sumatra and the Malay peninsula, Singapore developed refineries where the oil could be processed. Storage depots were built on the small offshore islands.

Transportation: Improving transportation helped lessen the isolation of Singapore as a British colony during the last part of the nineteenth century. Steamships gradually replaced British sailing vessels from the 1840's to the 1880's, offering quicker and more reliable service. The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, better known as the P. & O. Line, extended service to Singapore in 1845: by 1853 it was sending two ships per month on the route from England to Penang, Singapore, and Hong Kong. The completion of the Suez canal in 1869 helped shorten the sea journey between Europe and Asia, and encouraged the increased use of steamships (as large sailing ships could not navigate the canal). Singapore benefited by becoming a coaling station for steamers traveling through the Straits of Malacca.

As Singapore became more involved in selling agricultural and mineral export products from the Malay peninsula, demand grew for better transportation between the two areas. In 1898, construction began on a plan to link the various fragments of rail service that existed on the Malay peninsula. By 1909 the final link to Johore Baru (opposite Singapore island on the peninsula) was completed: it was now possible to travel by rail and rail-ferry all the way from Penang to Singapore. By 1923, the Johore Causeway was completed, eliminating the need for ferries by providing direct road and rail links between Singapore and Johore Baru.

By the 1920's, Singapore had a seaplane base at Sembawang and an aerodrome at Seletar that served both military and commercial planes. Regular commercial air service with Malaya was begun in 1937 by the Wearne brothers, but the company suffered a number of setbacks, including problems with the wooden aircraft being eaten by white ants.

Communications: Improvements in transportation shortened the time required for mail service between Singapore and Europe. However, even using the comparatively quick steamship service of the 1860's, mail usually required five weeks for delivery between England and Singapore. Communications sped up in 1870 with the installation of a telegraph service linking Singapore to India and from there on to Europe. By 1879, Singapore had its own telephone service, which was extended to Johore within a few years.

Within Singapore, numerous newspapers appeared to serve the needs of the ethnically and linguistically diverse community. In the 1830's, the *Singapore Chronicle* and the *Singapore Free Press* began publication. The *Straits Times* appeared in 1845, and soon became the major English language newspaper.

Chinese newspapers included the *Lat Pau* (established 1881) and the *Union Times* (*Nanyang Chung Hwei Pao*). The *Sin Jit Chew Poh* was started in 1929 by Aw Boon Haw, who is perhaps better known internationally as the maker of Tiger Balm brand ointments and medicines.

Singapore was one of the early centers of Malay language newspapers. Many Muslim pilgrims from the Malay peninsula and Indonesian archipelago came through Singapore on their way the holy city of Mecca in the Middle East. Some of these travelers also went to Egypt for advanced study, and often congregated in Singapore after their return to Southeast Asia. This community of religious scholars helped establish Singapore as a center for literature on issues of concern for the Southeast Asian Muslim world. Malay was used as the common language for these discussions. In 1876 the *Jawi Peranakan* began publication. (The term "Jawi Peranakan" refers to people of mixed Malay and Muslim Indian ancestry.) Other

early Malay papers included the *Bintang Timor* and the *Utusan Melayu*. The success of early Malay language newspapers in the Straits region reflected and reinforced the longstanding use of Malay as a lingua franca throughout the region.

A Multi-Ethnic Society

Ever since its inception, Singapore has been a city of many different peoples. When Raffles arrived in 1819, there were Malays, Chinese, *Orang Laut* (sea people), and a few other local groups (such as the *Orang Kallang* and *Orang Seletar*). Fifty years later, Singapore was also home to a sizable Indian community, and the Chinese population had soared to outnumber that of all other ethnic groups combined.

Chinese: Many Chinese flocked to Singapore to find work as artisans, laborers, and merchants. Many more also came through Singapore on their way to other destinations, such as Sumatra or the Malay peninsula. In 1880, 50,000 Chinese immigrants landed in Singapore. These Chinese were not a single, homogenous group: different immigrant communities were marked by their own language and customs. The largest Chinese groups included the Hokkien, Teochew, Cantonese, Hakka, and Hainanese.

In the early days, few Chinese women emigrated to Singapore. As Chinese men married local Malay women and established their own families, a distinctive, new culture emerged. This new group was often referred to as the "Straits Chinese." Other terms used to refer to the same group include "Baba" (for males) and "Nonya" (for females). The Baba community combined features of the Chinese and Malay culture. The women typically dressed in Malay clothes, and developed a distinctive cuisine that blended Chinese and Malay

cooking styles. Both men and women spoke a variety of Malay (known as Baba Malay) which included a number of Chinese words. Due to their long association with the British, many Babas also spoke English. A large number of Baba Chinese migrated from Malacca to Singapore soon after Raffles had established the new settlement.

Many Baba Chinese achieved positions of authority in the community. Some became wealthy merchants, others took seats on the legislative council, and some entered professional fields such as law or medicine. However, opportunities were much more limited for the Straits Chinese women, who were generally kept secluded in their family's house. It was not until 1911 that the first Chinese-language girls' school was opened (though an English medium school for Chinese girls had been started in 1899).

Life for the newly arrived Chinese immigrant was often difficult. Many arrived as indentured workers, meaning that they had pledged to work for a certain number of years in order to reimburse the cost of their trip from China. Living conditions were often crowded and unhealthy, and opium often provided a way to seek relief from the troubles of the day. Despite these hardships, many Chinese were able to make better lives for themselves through hard work and determination. Impressive "rags to riches" stories, however, often gave hope and inspiration to even the poorest laborer.

In 1877, the British created the office of the "Chinese Protectorate" to investigate and control aspects of the Chinese community in Singapore. The first "Protector" was William Pickering, who had already worked for five years in Singapore as Government Interpreter at the courts. Despite the fact that the Chinese were the largest group in Singapore, no British official there was able to speak any of the Chinese dialects until Pickering's arrival in 1872.

Having spent eight years in China before arriving in Singapore, Pickering was able to both read and write Chinese, and was thus better able to deal with the Chinese community than any of the other British administrators. Pickering made it a priority to improve translation in the court system, reduce the harsh treatment of coolies, and ban forced prostitution of Chinese women and girls. By the 1880's, British civil service cadets were routinely being sent to China for language training before taking up their posts in Singapore.

Most new immigrants tended to associate with other Chinese of the same dialect and ethnic background. This led to the development of many ethnically-based groups or clubs, including secret societies and commercial associations. The legitimate trade associations provided a valuable source of investment capital and business knowledge, and often provided assistance and employment opportunities to their members. The secret societies provided similar benefits, but were also involved in crime, prostitution, gambling, and extortion. Furthermore, rival societies often clashed with each other, resulting in riots and gang violence. In 1869 a law was passed requiring all secret societies to register as associations and to let police officers attend their meetings. This failed to stop the flow of criminal activity, and in 1890, the secret societies were officially banned, though they continued to exist as smaller underground groups.

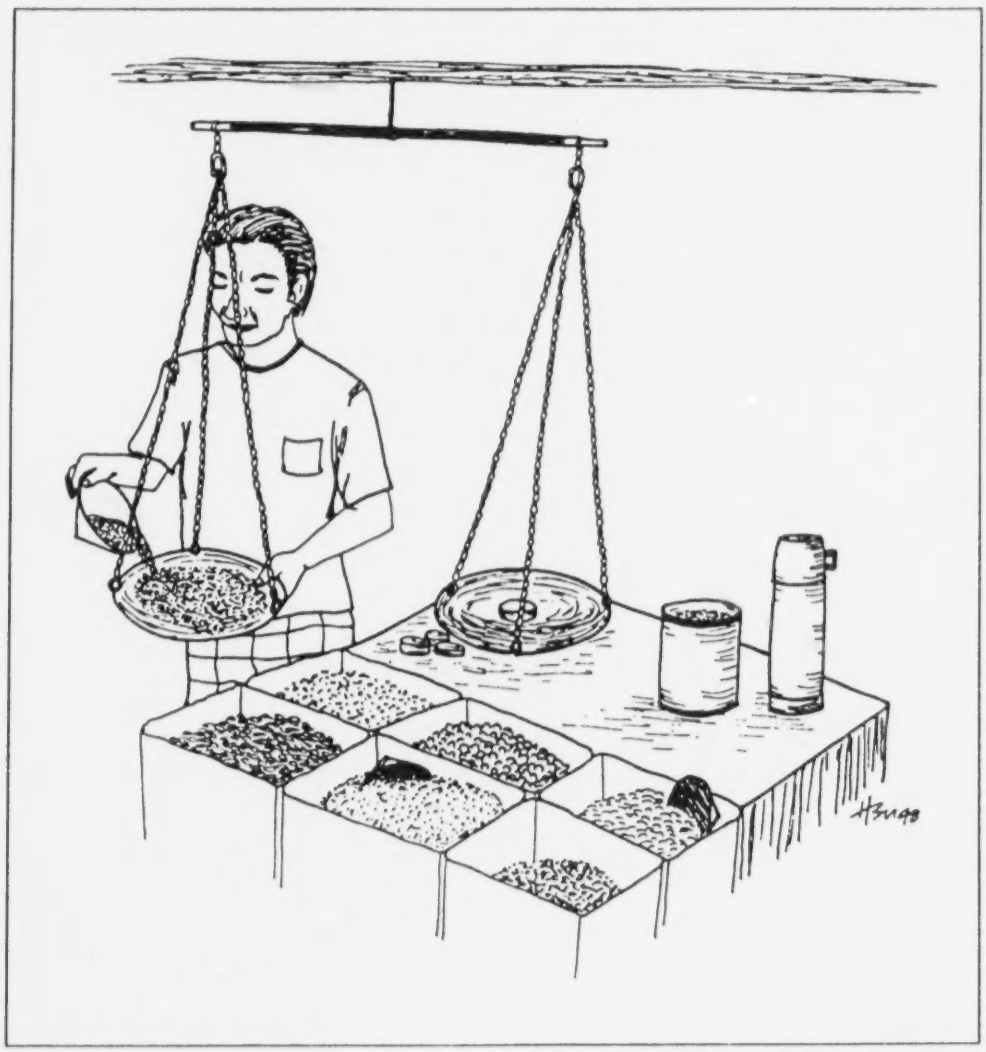
Other Chinese associations continued to grow, including some which began to look beyond local issues and to focus on developments in China. One such society was the Singapore branch of the T'ung-ming Hui [Chinese Revolutionary League], founded by Sun Yat Sen.

As a boy, Sun Yat Sen received his early education in Hawaii before going to Canton to study medicine. After completing his studies, he became involved in the increasing number of attempts to get rid of the ruling Manchu dynasty in China. After an unsuccessful attempt at revolt in Canton in 1895, Sun was forced to leave China. He traveled extensively throughout the *Nanyang* [or "Southern Seas," as the Chinese referred to the Southeast Asian region] to attract a following for his ideas. He visited Singapore many times during the first decade of the twentieth century. Singaporean support for Sun dwindled after several failed attempts at revolt in China, but surged after the success of the October 1911 rebellion in Wu-chang. Financial support from the Chinese community in Singapore (as well as other overseas Chinese communities) helped Sun Yat Sen consolidate his victory in 1911.

Indians: The Indian community in Singapore was characterized by just as much ethnic and linguistic diversity as the Chinese. The term "Indian" was generally applied to any person from the British controlled areas of what are now India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Burma. While most of the Indian population was Hindu, many were Muslim, and smaller numbers were Sikh, Christian, or Buddhist. Even more varied were the languages used by the various Indian sub-communities. The economic status of new Indian arrivals also reflected a range of diversity. Some Indians came as civil servants, traders, or laborers, while still others were brought to Singapore as convicts.

The Indian community was the only segment of the Singapore community to show a decline in the mid to late nineteenth century. Many Indians returned to their homeland after seeking their fortunes in Singapore, while others went to work on the Malay peninsula. Those

who stayed in Singapore often worked as shopkeepers, textile or jewelry merchants, dockside laborers, money changers, or ox-cart drivers. Those with the benefit of more education became doctors, lawyers, teachers, or government administrators.



Spice Seller

British administrators sent large numbers of convicts from India to Singapore during the mid-nineteenth century. As a tax-free port, Singapore had few sources of revenue to finance public works, and convict labor was widely used to build government offices, lighthouses, and even churches. While conditions for the prisoners were undoubtedly harsh, many convicts were given the opportunity to learn a useful skill that would allow them to successfully reintegrate with society at the end of their sentence. This relatively enlightened emphasis on rehabilitation rather than punishment was unusual for its time, and drew praise and interest from its various quarters. Prison administrators from several foreign countries visited Singapore to observe the system at work.

During the First World War, the quiet and comfortable life of Singapore was briefly disrupted when a regiment of Punjabi Muslims mutinied against its officers. Up to that time, Singapore had been relatively unaffected by the war. Preparations were underway for the Indian Muslim troops of the Fifth Light Infantry Regiment to be transported to Hong Kong, but rumors began to spread among the troops that they were actually going to be sent to France or even Turkey, where they might be forced to fight fellow Muslims. The 800 soldiers of the regiment refused to go, and killed their commanding officers. For the next ten days they roamed the streets, attacking British residents and freeing the Germans who had been interned for the duration of the war. Without a unified leadership or plan of action, the mutineers were quickly rounded up by a combined force of police, Malay troops from Johore, civilian volunteers, and crew members from the various French, Japanese, and Russian ships which were in port. Following the mutiny, all Indian residents in Singapore were required to register with the government. This created some ill will on behalf of the Indian community,

who felt unfairly tarnished by public opinion even though the overwhelming majority of them were loyal and law-abiding residents who had had no involvement with the mutiny. Fortunately, the unrest was an isolated incident and had only lasted ten days: tension between the Indian and non-Indian communities eventually subsided as people resumed their daily routines.

Malays: The core of the Malay community of Singapore consisted of Malays from the peninsula and Malay speaking people from the Riau area of Sumatra. Religious bonds tended to be a dominant force among the various ethnic groups within the Muslim community. Thus, affiliation with the Malay community was extended to other Muslims from around the archipelago, including immigrants from Java, Sulawesi and Bawean (a small island north of Java). Similarly, the Arab and Jawi-Peranakan (mixed Malay and Indian) residents also formed part of the broader Muslim community. By 1901 the combined population of all these groups was over thirty-six thousand.

The Malay-Muslim community of Singapore took an interest in the Pan-Islamic reform movement which had spread out from Egypt and other areas of the Middle East. The movement advocated a modernization of beliefs, and provided a challenge to the established conservative and traditional religious leaders. Singapore became a Southeast Asian center for Islamic debate, literature, and reform. The Malay-language press provided a vehicle to disseminate these ideas throughout the region.

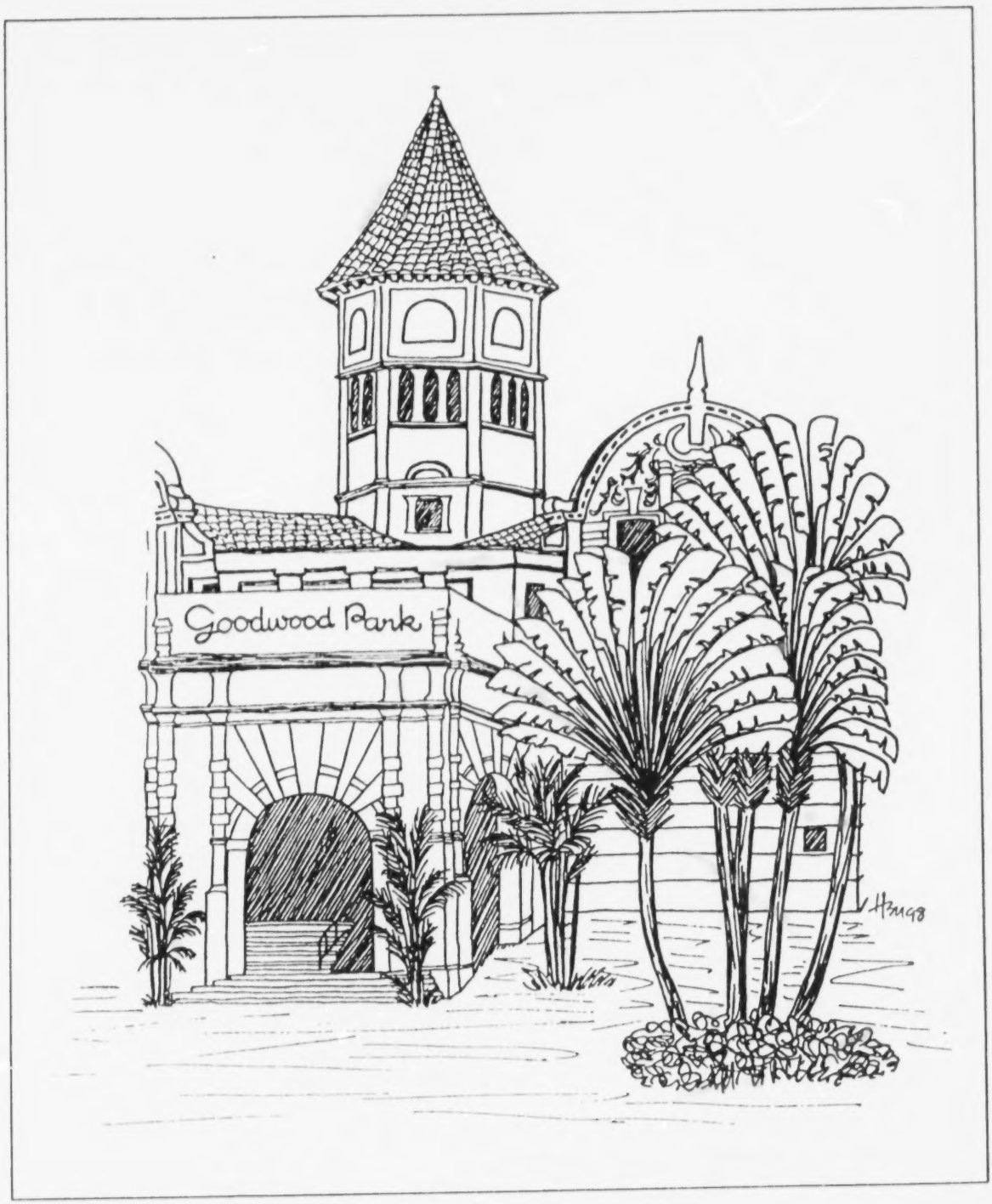
Leadership in the Malay community changed with the times. Sultan Hussein, the early leader who had been brought in by Raffles, died in 1835. By then the family had fallen upon

hard times, and soon slipped into relative obscurity. In 1885 the title of Sultan of Johore was transferred to Abu Bakar, a descendent of the Temenggong of Singapore. Abu Bakar was popular with the European community, and attended many of their social events. He also occasionally amused himself by assuming the name of Albert Baker when meeting newly arrived Europeans, only later revealing to them that they had been conversing with the sultan.

While Sultan Abu Bakar and his son, Ibrahim, made the rounds of society parties and galas, the majority of the Malay population lived in much more modest circumstances. Many Malays occupied low-level jobs, and none rose to rival the great business empires of the most successful Chinese. The Arab and Jawi-Peranakan communities were probably the most commercially successful groups among the Muslim community of Singapore.

Europeans, Eurasians, and Other Minorities: The British always formed a small percentage of Singapore's population. Even as late as 1881, there were fewer than 3,000 people within the entire European community. British civil servants held all effective political power in the colony, and most private British citizens led comfortable lives attached to one of the many merchant houses. Social life often centered around clubs and sporting activities, such as cricket.

The life of the typical British resident has been recorded in numerous letters and reports. John Cameron, editor of the Straits Times, provided one account of the work-day of his fellow British expatriates, the main points of which are summarized in the following paragraph.



The old Teutonia Club (now part of the Goodwood Park Hotel).

At the sound of the five o'clock morning canon, residents awoke and took an early morning ride or walk. Returning home, a cup of coffee or tea was consumed with bread and fruit while "lolling about in the verandahs" for another hour or two. At half past eight, people bathed and dressed. By nine o'clock, people assembled for a breakfast of fish, curry, rice, and eggs, accompanied by a few glasses of claret. Suitably fortified, the merchants would set off for the commercial square, where they would make the rounds to chat and learn the news of the morning. Five hours after rising, few people had yet started working. By ten or half past ten o'clock, the good merchant would finally arrive at his place of business, where he would work until "tiffin time" (lunch) at one o'clock.

After eating more curry, rice, and fruit, the custom was to relax for half an hour (no doubt also encouraged by the consumption of more claret or beer). Next it was time to read the newspaper. At two o'clock most people attended the "exchange hour" to discuss business or simply chat on "irrelevant matters." Businesses generally closed by half past four or five o'clock, at which time the younger set took off for a game of cricket. With this leisurely work schedule it is perhaps not surprising that no European ever built a fortune to rival those of the most successful Chinese merchants.

Aside from the British, a number of other non-Asian groups took up residence in Singapore. These included Jews, Armenians, Germans, and Portuguese.

Over time, a Eurasian community also developed. Those who came from Malacca were often part Dutch or Portuguese and part Malay. Anglo-Indian and Anglo-Chinese communities also grew, and many from these groups found government employment as clerks or minor officials.

Singapore continued to grow at a rapid pace. Britain viewed the colony as the jewel of its Straits Settlements. But confidence in the British administration was about to evaporate as world events brought Singapore into the grip of World War II.

Syonan: Singapore and World War II

Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Singapore had been fortunate enough to be able to avoid hostilities with other countries. The Dutch, who claimed to have control over that area of the Straits of Malacca, could easily have taken over the island during the early days of Farquhar's administration. Germany could have made an attempt to attack the British in Singapore during World War I. Luckily for the British, neither of these threats resulted in any outbreak of war. But that luck began to run out as Japan entered World War II.

Prelude to War

Before World War II broke out in Europe in 1939, Japan had already become involved with military campaigns in Asia. In 1931 Japan invaded Manchuria, and in 1937 troops were sent in to conquer China. In Singapore, news of these events provoked angry reaction from the Chinese community. Japanese goods were boycotted and the Chinese donated funds to help the war effort back in China. The British authorities tried to maintain a sense of calm in Singapore. Japan had been an ally of Britain during the First World War, and Japanese sailors had been among those who had helped put down the mutiny of Indian troops in Singapore in 1915. However continuing escalation of the Japanese invasion of China drew increased concern from Britain.

In 1937, senior British officers in Singapore tried to estimate how well Britain could defend her possessions at Singapore and the Malay peninsula in the event of a Japanese attack. Singapore was home to a large, newly constructed naval base, two airfields, and an impressive array of artillery defense works meant to protect Singapore and its bases from naval assaults. The naval base was sheltered on the north coast of Singapore along the narrow strait separating Singapore island from the Malay peninsula. Because Britain also controlled the Malaya peninsula, it had always been assumed that the threat of foreign attack on Singapore lay to the south, where an open front to the South China Seas would allow enemy naval forces to attack the island. Therefore the defense works were concentrated on the southeast coast guarding the ocean approach to the island.

Yet British officers such as Lieutenant-Colonel Arthur Percival realized that Singapore and its naval base would be vulnerable if attacked from the north. Percival imagined how the Japanese could land in northern Malaya and advance down the peninsula to threaten Singapore. Accordingly he and his superior officer recommended that new defense works be built at locations in the north of the peninsula and in neighboring Johore. These suggestions were not accepted by the War Office in London, though a number of new airstrips were constructed on the Malay peninsula.

Singaporeans felt some sense of security from the large naval and air facilities, as well as the heavy artillery pointing out to sea. These fortifications had led many to describe Singapore as a fortress, "the Gibraltar of the East." The only problem was that the "fortress" was largely empty. Britain could not afford to maintain a large naval fleet in Singapore. Instead, the War Office hoped that Singapore would be able to "hold out" for the estimated

seventy or more days that would be needed to send a fleet over from Britain. The naval yard remained virtually shipless. Similarly, the Singapore airfields suffered from a severe shortage of aircraft. In hindsight it is easy to ask why such an important strategic location, with such good military support facilities, should have been left with hardly any navy or air force. However, at the time the British were hopeful that Japan would not invade Southeast Asia, and were in any event preoccupied with war on the European, North African and Middle Eastern fronts. Furthermore, some top British officials had scant knowledge of the nature of Singapore's defenses. Prime Minister Churchill himself later admitted that he had no idea that Singapore lacked fortifications facing the peninsula.

Japanese Invasion of the Malay Peninsula

As the Japanese invasion of China continued, the American and allied European countries exerted increasing diplomatic and economic pressure against the Japanese. Faced with trade sanctions that prevented her from buying essential war-time supplies such as metal or fuel from America, Japan looked towards the resource-rich territories of Southeast Asia as a new source for these materials. As a first step, the Japanese moved into the French colonies of Indochina. By this time, France had fallen to the Germans, and was powerless to stop the Japanese forces in Southeast Asia.

On December 8, 1941, Japan started a bold offensive strike to begin her invasion of Southeast Asia and to reduce the threat of the American navy. Nearly simultaneous attacks were launched on Hong Kong, Malaya, the Philippines, Thailand and Pearl Harbor (where the date was still December 7, due its position east of the international date line). Singapore was also bombed.

The Japanese launched a rapid advance down the Malay peninsula. Many British airfields were bombed, destroying numerous aircraft and putting the airstrips out of action. This allowed the numerically superior Japanese airforce to patrol the skies and continue bombing raids with little resistance from the British.It also provided Japanese land forces with the opportunity to advance quickly. The Japanese infantry relied on bicycles to give them added speed and mobility. The bicycles could be ridden on narrow trails and carried across streams or ditches, and allowed the troops to advance much more quickly than they could on foot. British forces, without the benefit of air cover, were put on the defensive. The British kept retreating, losing ground in a pattern remarkably similar to Percival's pre-war report on the likely outcome of a Japanese attack.

The arrival of Allied troops increased the number of military personnel in Singapore, but it soon became clear that few British naval vessels or aircraft could be spared to reinforce Singapore's defenses. Churchill had already sent a battleship, an aircraft carrier and a cruiser to help defend Singapore. The aircraft carrier ran aground before reaching Singapore, leaving the other two ships to provide for Singapore's naval defense. In an effort to stall the advance of the Japanese on the peninsula, the two ships sailed up the east coast of Malaya, where they were promptly sunk by the Japanese airforce.

Without sufficient air or naval power, it was simply a matter of time before British and Allied forces fell back from the peninsula to Singapore. The Johore causeway linking Singapore to the peninsula was blown up after the last British troops had made the retreat into Singapore. The Japanese were not far behind. On the night of February 8, 1942, Japanese forces began to cross the narrow Johore straits and land on Singapore. The Allied troops had

inadequate defensive lines, and lost ground every day. Churchill wired instructions that Singapore must be held at all cost, stating that "commanders and senior officers should die with their troops. The honour of the British Empire and of the British Army is at stake."

Fierce fighting continued as the Allied troops took a final stand at the outskirts of the city, which at this time was filled with refugees and suffering from constant bombing and artillery attacks. When the situation was clearly hopeless, Percival received permission from his superiors to surrender. On February 15, just ten weeks after the beginning of the Malayan campaign, Percival met with Japanese Lieutenant-General Tomoyuki Yamashita at the Ford factory in Bukit Timah, where he handed over control of the city.

Yamashita had succeeded in capturing Singapore with a fighting force and ammunition supply that was less than half that of the Allies. Air supremacy, surprise, and lack of Allied defenses had all contributed to the Japanese success. The British had only made adequate defensive positions to protect themselves from a seaward attack. Throughout the desperate fighting for the city, the big guns along the southern coast pointing out to sea lay still and silent.

Singapore under Japanese Administration

The Japanese renamed Singapore *Syonan*, meaning "Light of the South." Their first job was to restore order to the city, which lay in shambles before them. Many roads, buildings, and water pipes had been destroyed by artillery fire or air raids. Thousands of sick, wounded, and homeless people wandered through the city. It took weeks to re-establish basic municipal services.

The British and Australian troops were interned at the Selarang Barracks at Changi on the east end of the island. European civilians were sent to the nearby Changi Jail. The Malay troops were allowed to go home, while the Indian troops were given the choice of joining the Japanese forces or being locked up with the rest of the Allied forces.

The local Chinese population suffered greatly during the first few weeks of the occupation. Many thousands of Chinese men were rounded up on charges of having supported anti-Japanese resistance efforts in China: some were imprisoned, most were executed. Later, the Singaporean Chinese community was singled out to pay large "gifts" and taxes to the Japanese administration.

The Japanese claimed to be building a "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" in Southeast Asia. Originally the Japanese had hoped that the local Asian population would joyfully welcome them as liberators from the European imperialists. However, harsh war-time conditions and brutal treatment from Japanese soldiers made most of the local population unsympathetic toward the Japanese.

By the middle of 1943 the Japanese had suffered a number of setbacks. They received a severe blow at the battle of Midway, and were put on the defensive. The Japanese intensified the war effort, using conscript labor to help build roads, airfields, and railways. Allied prisoners from Singapore were sent to work on the notorious Thai-Burmese railway. Those who remained in Singapore saw their rations cut in 1944 and 1945.

Civilians also faced hardship, especially in the face of rampant inflation. Electric lightbulbs which had cost less than fifty cents each in December 1941 cost over $200 by the end of the war. Staples such as rice were also subject to runaway price increases, especially

during the last months of the war: rice that had cost $5 before the Japanese invasion cost $4,000 by June 1945. Food was always in short supply, and many people were forced to grow their own vegetables on any vacant patch of land that they could find. The Japanese encouraged thousands of families to leave Singapore and build new farming communities on the Malay peninsula. Unfortunately, many of the people who left for these new communities fell sick from malaria, and food production remained low as the former city dwellers tried their hand at farming in the poor soil and hilly conditions of their allotted land.

Active resistance to the Japanese was stronger on the Malay peninsula (where there were more areas available for isolated hideouts) than in Singapore. Most significant was the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA), many members of which had been supporters of the pre-war Malayan Communist Party (MCP).

Finally, in August, 1945, word was received of the Japanese surrender. There was great rejoicing when British Commonwealth troops finally arrived with Admiral Lord Mountbatten, Supreme Allied Commander in Southeast Asia, to formally accept the local surrender of the Japanese in Singapore. But the war had proven that the British were far from invincible. British rule over her colonies in Southeast Asia was soon to come to an end. Lee Kuan Yew, who was to become the long time leader of the independent country of Singapore, later stated "when the war came to an end in 1945, there was never a chance of the old type of British colonial system ever being re-created. The scales had fallen from our eyes and we saw for ourselves that the local people could run the country."

Timeline of Important Events

1850 - 1870	Thousands of immigrants arrive from China to work in the tin mines of the Malay peninsula. Singapore becomes a major export center for Malay tin.
1858	English East India Company dissolved.
1867	Straits Settlements become a crown colony administered from London.
1869	Opening of Suez Canal shortens trip from Europe to Singapore. First Asian appointed to Legislative Council of the Straits Settlements. Registration Ordinance passed to limit activities of secret societies.
1870	First telegraph connection established between Singapore and Europe.
1877	Pickering becomes first "Chinese Protectorate" in Singapore.
1878	Chinese arrivals in Singapore exceed 100,000 (some bound for Malaya).
1890	Chinese secret societies banned in Singapore.
1900 - 1920	Increased world demand (and "Mad" Ridley's research in rubber cultivation and tapping) creates rubber boom in Malaya. By 1920 Malaya accounts for over 50% of world's rubber production (mostly sold via Singapore).
1909	Administration takes over monopoly on sale of opium (continues until 1943).
1911	Sun Yat Sen leads successful revolution in China. Singapore Chinese community supports Sun's government.
1915	Singapore little affected by World War I, except for short-lived Indian mutiny.
1920 - 1940	Britain slowly implements plan to make Singapore its main Far Eastern naval base. Major naval shipyards are built, but few ships are stationed there.
1929	Beginning of Depression cuts international demand for tin and rubber.
1937	Japanese troops invade China.
1941	Japan attacks Pearl Harbor, Singapore, and other Pacific locations. Singapore's population approximately 770,000.
1942	Allied forces in Singapore surrender to Japanese.
1942- 1945	Japanese administer Singapore as Syonan for remainder of WWII.

Exercises

I Multiple Choice

Beside each of the following questions, write the letter of the option that provides the best answer.

1) __ By the time the Straits Settlements had become a crown colony, which of these pairs of exports from the Malay peninsula provided Singapore with the most income?

a) tin and coal
b) tin and mother-of-pearl
c) tin and rubber
d) rice and sago

2) __ When they were made a crown colony in 1867, the Straits Settlements were put under direct control of

a) the British authorities in India
b) the East India Company
c) the Colonial Office
d) the Asia/Africa Office

3) __ The majority of the new workers arriving to work in the Malaysian tin mines were:

a) Malay
b) Indian
c) Javanese
d) Chinese

4) __ The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869

a) encouraged the increased use of steamships
b) had little effect on Singapore
c) provided quicker access between Singapore and the Malay peninsula
d) inspired the creation of the P.& O. Line

5) __ The Straits Chinese (also known as the Baba community) consisted of people whose heritage was primarily a mixture of Chinese and:

a) Indian
b) Arab
c) Portuguese
d) Malay

6) __ By the time of the creation of the Straits Settlements the largest ethnic group in Singapore was the

a) Malays
b) Europeans
c) Chinese
d) Indian

7) __ As the first British official in Singapore who was fluent in a Chinese dialect, William Pickering was appointed in 1877 as the:

a) Governor-General of Singapore
b) Supreme Court judge
c) Chinese Protector
d) senior language instructor for the British civil service

8) __ The short-lived mutiny in Singapore during WWI involved troops who were mainly:

a) Malay
b) Chinese
c) mixed European and Asian
d) Indian

9) __ The main reason why Singapore was vulnerable to Japanese attack during WWII was:

a) the lack of military support facilities such as shipyards and airfields
b) the lack of forethought concerning the possible approaches that could be used by Japanese forces
c) the lack of military ships and aircraft
d) slow communications between Singapore and the War Office in London

10) __ While Singapore was under Japanese administration, the Japanese did all of the following **except**:

a) hope that the Asian residents would willingly participate Japan's idea of creating a "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere."
b) intern all European residents
c) jail all Malay troops
d) investigate local Chinese for possible support of anti-Japanese activities

II Matching Definitions

Write the letter identifying the correct description for each of the people listed below.

1) __ Arthur Percival	A) Sultan of Johore and descendent of Temenggong of Singapore
2) __ Aw Boon Haw	B) Commander of the army that captured Singapore and renamed the city Syonan
3) __ William Pickering	C) One of the military officers responsible for the defense of Singapore in 1941
4) __ Abu Bakar	D) Founder of a major Chinese-language newspaper and the Tiger Balm brand of ointments
5) __ Tomoyuki Yamashita	E) First "Chinese Protector" of Singapore

III Fill in the Blanks

1) _____ often traveled to Singapore in the early 1900's seeking support for his plans for revolution in China.

2) The Jawi-Peranakan community of Singapore primarily consisted of people with mixed Indian and _____ ancestry.

3) The rapid rise in the popularity of the automobile lead to increased world-wide demand for _____, which became a major export for Malaya.

4) During their offense down the Malay peninsula to Singapore, many of the Japanese infantry relied on _____ to provide them with a cheap, simple way to travel more quickly.

5) _____ was widely used by Singapore's Muslim community and others in Southeast Asia as a "lingua franca."

IV Topic for Debate

When the Japanese captured Singapore in 1942, they gave the Indian soldiers the opportunity to fight for the Japanese or to be jailed with the rest of the Allied forces.

Separate the class into those who believe it would make sense for the Indians to join the Japanese fight the British (who had colonized India for many years) and try to win independence for India and those who believe the Indian forces should surrender and endure the hardships of being prisoners-of-war.

V Creative Writing

1) Re-read the description of British expatriate life in Singapore. Write an entry in your diary describing a day in your life as a British merchant in mid-nineteenth century Singapore.

2) Imagine that you are a Chinese shopkeeper in Singapore during the year 1942. The Japanese have just taken over control of the city from the British. What are your thoughts and emotions as you see the Japanese forces marching through the city? Outline your hopes and fears as the Japanese include Singapore into their "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere."

Chapter Three: Independence

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This chapter describes the transition of Singapore from British colony to the modern independent state that we know today. After World War II, Singapore struggled both to regain its former prosperity and to assert its independence from Britain. Following a brief political union with neighboring Malaysia, Singapore found itself alone as a new country with almost no natural resources except for its hardworking population. Despite initial difficulties, such as labor unrest, independent Singapore quickly rose to become a major international financial and trading center, and achieved a standard of living second in Asia only to Japan.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this chapter you should be able to describe the following topics:

- ✓ The difficulties facing Singapore at the end of WWII
- ✓ The efforts to win indepence for Singapore
- ✓ The administrations of David Marshall and Lim Hock Yew
- ✓ The emergence of the Peoples' Action Party
- ✓ The administration of Lee Kuan Yew
- ✓ Modern Singapore's economic achievements
- ✓ Singapore's place within the regional and international community

The Post War Years

Immediately after the war, Singapore was placed under the British Military Administration which began the task of repairing damaged roads, airfields, and port facilities, as well as improving water and electrical service. Transportation and communications services were restored, and schools reopened. Yet food shortages remained, and labor strikes disrupted the restoration effort.

In April 1946, the British Military Administration disbanded and Singapore once more became a crown colony with a civil administration. Unlike its pre-war colonial status, however, Singapore was no longer part of the Straits Settlements: Penang and Malacca were now incorporated with the rest of the Malay peninsula into a new Malayan Union. Singapore and the Malayan Union shared a common currency and some services, such as the postal system, but each dealt with local matters separately under its own government.

Both Singapore and the Malay peninsula were eager to have more independence from British rule. This desire for autonomy manifested itself in many ways. On the Malay peninsula, local opposition to the constitution of the Malayan Union resulted in a revised agreement with the British Colonial Office. Under this new agreement of 1948, the states of the former Malayan Union were reorganized into a new Federation of Malaya.

Some felt the new agreement was not enough: a few months later the Malayan Communist Party (MCP) began a long campaign of violence in an attempt to take over Malaya and gain complete independence from the British. A state of emergency was declared in the Federation which was to last for twelve years. The MCP still had stores of weapons and ammunition from its involvement in resistance activity during the war, when it had been

a major element within the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army. Now the MCP organized a new resistance force, the Malayan People's Anti-British Army, to mount an insurrection against the British. The campaign eventually failed, but it was serious enough to make many people in the region concerned and suspicious about communist groups.

The Road to Independence

In Singapore, the desire for self government led to the establishment in 1948 of a new political party called the Singapore Labor Party. It was later reorganized as the Labor Front under the leadership of David Marshall. Marshall was a lawyer who had fought and been interned during the war. Before leading the Labor Front, Marshall had already become well known as an eloquent speaker and a critic of British colonial rule.

In 1953, Sir George Rendel was appointed to create a commission whose purpose was to revise the existing colonial framework in Singapore. Two years later, the Rendel Commision's revisions became law and elections were scheduled for April 1955. Marshall's Labor Front emerged victorious in these elections, and Marshall formed a coalition government to become Singapore's first Chief Minister.

Under the new constitution, the legislative assembly was composed of 25 elected and seven appointed positions. The Governor, who nominated the seven non-elected members of the assembly, had complete control over matters of defense and security. The power of the Governor and his appointees gave the British a large degree of control in the new government, though there was also some opportunity for local representation to be heard.

Marshall was committed to gaining a larger degree of self rule. In 1956 he led a delegation to London to ask for the right of internal self-government for Singapore by April

1957. Britain was prepared to revise some of the terms of the Rendel constitution, but still wanted ultimate power over issues of security and defense. They proposed the creation of a defense council in which Singapore and Britain each had the same number of voting members, with the British High Commissioner holding the right to cast the deciding vote in the event of a tie. Marshall would not accept this arrangement. He had wanted full internal self-rule for Singapore, and having failed to negotiate that from the British, he decided to resign from his position after returning to Singapore.

Following Marshall's resignation, Labor Front deputy Lim Yew Hock assumed the title of Chief Minister. Lim was able to hold further talks in London in 1957. The British were impressed that Lim had responded more forcefully than Marshall had in dealing with a series of communist-inspired strikes. While repeating most of the terms that they had proposed the previous year, the British changed their position regarding the defense council issue that had created the impasse during the talks with Marshall. The new proposal still gave equal representation to Britain and Singapore on the council, but gave control of the deciding vote to a member from the Malay Federation. Lim agreed to these terms, and final details for a new constitution were approved the following year. Singapore was now a state with full control over all domestic affairs. In May 1959, the first elections were held under the new constitution.

Lee Kuan Yew and the People's Action Party

Winning 43 of the available 51 seats in parliament, the clear winner of the 1959 elections was the People's Action Party (PAP) under the control of Lee Kuan Yew. Many business owners and conservatives were dismayed at the election results, for the PAP was

well known for its large communist faction. Overseas investors and local businessmen alike feared that the extreme left wing of the party might gain control of the PAP and impose a communist system of administration, perhaps even through open revolution. However, the PAP leader and new Prime Minister, Lee Kuan Yew, had no plans for a communist takeover. He was a skilled politician who advocated a moderate socialist system: he had courted the communist voters simply to gain the necessary public support to ensure victory for his party at the elections. Now he was faced with the delicate task of reconciling and retaining control over the moderate and extremist factions within his party.

Lee Kuan Yew had helped form the PAP in 1954, and had previously distinguished himself as an able lawyer. As a student, Lee attended Raffles College, where he studied economics, mathematics and English literature. His education was interrupted by the war, after which he went to Cambridge to study law. After graduating with high honors, Lee returned to Singapore and married Kwa Geok Choo, another Cambridge law graduate. He then set up a law practice with his wife, and often took on cases representing the interests of trade unions.

For the next several years, Lee Kuan Yew carefully guided the government, placing attention on matters such as education, housing, industrialization, population control, and dealing with the restive trade union movement. By 1961, many of the extremists within the PAP left to start their own party, the Socialist Front (Barisan Sosialis). While this weakened the membership of the PAP, Lee continued to hold on to power. He actively sought reunification with the now independent Federation of Malaya, claiming that this would help safeguard Singapore's economy, which was closely intertwined with that of Malaya.

The Federation of Malaya had mixed feelings about including Singapore within its borders. Both Malaya and Singapore had inherited common systems of administration, law, and education from the British. Singapore's strategically located port and its established status as a major international trade center helped provide Malaya with a conduit through which to export its raw materials, such as tin and rubber. Yet the Federation was strongly anti-communist, and viewed the leftist elements within PAP with grave concern. Furthermore, Malaya was aware that the inclusion of Singapore would have a major effect on the racial composition of the Federation's population: the Chinese would become the single largest ethnic group, slightly outnumbering the Malays.

Merger of Malaya and Singapore

In an attempt to preserve the existing racial balance within the Federation, Malayan Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman suggested that the proposed merger of Malaya and Singapore should also include the British territories in northern Borneo. By the end of 1961, there was a provisional agreement by all those involved to go ahead with the merger. In September of 1962, a referendum was held in Singapore to put its government's proposal for the merger into the hands of the people. Slightly over 70 per cent of the ballots were cast in favor of the merger. One year later, the new Federation of Malaysia was created from the old Federation of Malaya, Singapore, Sarawak, and Sabah.

Singapore was now part of an independent nation. Lee Kuan Yew hoped that joining the Federation would provide a stable political and economic framework in which Singapore could prosper. But stability was not forthcoming.

Singapore felt pressure from Indonesian leaders, who were unhappy with the incorporation into Malaysia of the Borneo territories of Sarawak and Sabah. Indonesia considered these parts of Borneo as candidates for inclusion into a future, larger Indonesia. A policy of confrontation against Malaysia was adopted, during which Singapore suffered from a trade embargo and became the site of several bombings.

Meanwhile, continuing friction between the Malay dominated peninsula and the Chinese majority in Singapore made it difficult for both sides to feel happy with the new arrangement. In 1964, fighting broke out in Singapore between Malays and Chinese, causing 22 deaths and hundreds of injuries. The Malays on the peninsula, who still vividly recalled the twelve year long Emergency against the Communists, were wary of the activities of the PAP (even though its most radical members had already broken away from the party). Political rivalry between Singapore and the peninsula grew harsher and more bitter. While recovering from illness in London, the Malaysian Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman, finally decided that it was not possible to keep Singapore within the Federation. When Lee Kuan Yew was informed of this, he tried to persuade the Malaysian leadership to reverse their decision. But there was no chance for a change of heart, and Singapore was asked to leave the Federation. On the ninth of August, 1965, Singapore was proclaimed an independent country.

An Independent Singapore

> "So, small though we may be in Southeast Asia and with an independence thrust upon us, I say we grasp it firmly with both hands and make sure that this is ours for all time. From here, we build."
>
> Lee Kuan Yew

As a newly independent country, Singapore faced an uncertain future. She was dependent on the Federation of Malaya for a large portion of her water supply and for much of her trade. Unemployment stood at 13 per cent while the literacy rate was 52 per cent. Singapore was a small island of only 221 square miles. With few natural resources and a small population, many considered Singapore unable to support a prosperous, modern economy.

In an attempt to overcome some of these problems, Singapore began a program of industrialization designed to both create jobs and boost export earnings. Incentives were given to foreign investors to establish businesses in Singapore. In the early days, industrialization focused on labor intensive industries and on producing items that had previously been imported. More recently, the emphasis has shifted to producing high tech items, such as computer components. During the first year of independence, the economy grew by eight per cent, and for the next eight years increased by an annual average of thirteen per cent.

The end of Indonesia's Confrontation policy allowed trade to resume between the two countries. By 1967 Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and the Philippines agreed to cooperate in issues of economics, regional security, and cultural exchange by forming the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Singapore's trade continued to grow.

In 1968 the British announced that they would gradually withdraw all their remaining troops from Singapore. Britain had been allowed to maintain a military base in Singapore for the purpose of maintaining regional stability. Without the British forces, Singapore was suddenly even more vulnerable. Since 1967, all male Singaporean citizens had been required

to sign up for national military service upon reaching the age of eighteen. Now rapid efforts were made to increase the efficiency of Singapore's fighting forces.

The withdrawal of British troops posed a serious economic threat to Singapore. The bases had employed 25,000 Singaporeans, and had generated a substantial amount of income for the economy. An estimated 20 per cent of the work force was directly or indirectly associated with the British bases. The PAP, which had just won new parliamentary elections in April 1968, responded to the crisis with a number of moves designed to add strength to the economy. The naval base was converted into Sembawang Shipyards Ltd. for use as a commercial shipyard repair facility. The Economic Development Board was reorganized to attract more foreign investment. The International Trading Company (Intraco), a $50 million organization jointly owned by the government and private sector, was created to help Singapore's foreign trade with countries with centrally planned economies (particularly the USSR and Eastern Europe), as well as to buy raw materials in bulk at competitive prices for distribution to Singaporean industries. New laws were also passed to limit the power of the trade unions. Labor unrest was seen as a deterrent to foreign investment in Singapore, and the new laws helped usher in a relatively strike-free era of cooperation between government and the unions. By 1973 the number of work days lost as a result of strikes had decreased to one twentieth the 1965 level.

By 1975, ten year's after achieving independence, Singapore had succeeded in building a strong economy and a stable government. Lee Kuan Yew emphasized the need for developing a "rugged society" and a unique Singaporean identity. According to this viewpoint, Singapore's people had to work hard and forge a common sense of purpose.

Ethnic and cultural differences were to be celebrated as a source of diversity, while at the same time recognizing a pride in the ties that bound Singaporeans together as one nation. Lee summarized his vision of the new Singaporean as "healthy, robust, rugged, and with a sense of social cohesiveness and discipline, of belonging to a community."

The Merlion, national symbol of Singapore.

To help foster this sense of community, the Government continued its policy of ensuring that occupants of different ethnicities were represented in government housing blocks in approximate accordance with their proportion in the total population. The Housing and Development Board constructed tens of thousands of apartment units to provide affordable housing to Singaporeans, and allotted the apartments to mix Chinese, Tamil, Malay, and other groups within the same buildings. The idea was to overcome racial barriers by literally forcing the different groups to live side by side. When apartment owners started selling and switching units (sometimes to rejoin family relations and friends in other buildings), the government noticed that new pockets of all-Chinese or all-Malay areas were developing within the housing units. To counteract this trend, the government insisted that if owners left an apartment, the new occupant of that apartment had to be of the same ethnicity as the old owner.

Integrated schooling was another means used by the government to mix people of all ethnicities together and create a common identity. Every morning, students of all ethnic backgrounds recited the following pledge:

> We, the citizens of Singapore, pledge ourselves as one united people regardless of race, language or religion to build a democratic society based on justice and equality so as to achieve happiness, prosperity and progress for our nation.

English was the main medium of education, but students were also required to study their mother tongue. It should be noted that the languages available for this "mother tongue

requirement" were limited to Mandarin, Tamil, and Malay. Many students did not speak any of these languages at home: most Chinese spoke Hokkien, Teochew, Cantonese or some other non-Mandarin Chinese dialect, while many Indians spoke Malayalam, Punjabi, Telegu, Hindi, Bengali or some other Indian language rather than Tamil. Thus, it is not uncommon for many Singaporeans to be able to communicate in three languages.

Economy

During the 1980's and 1990's Singapore has often been referred to as one of the four "Asian dragons" (or tigers). This term, also applied to South Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong, was used to indicate Singapore's status as a "newly industrialized economy" (NIE). Fueled by many years of high economic growth, Singapore has emerged as one of Asia's best success stories. In 1996 and 1997 Singapore was ranked by the World Economic Forum in Geneva as the world's most competitive economy.

Singapore's economy has long been dependent on international trade. Singapore has benefited in several ways from its strategic location and reputation as a trade center. First, it has served as a trans-shipment center for goods arriving from and destined for foreign ports. Second, it has also developed an advanced ship repair and maintenance facility to service passing ships. Third, Singapore has earned profits from adding value to imported items and exporting the finished products. For example, Singapore imports crude oil, refines it, and sells it on the world market. Fourth, Singapore has developed a sophisticated infrastructure, including advanced telecommunication and network facilities, which has served to attract foreign businesses and help make Singapore grow as a center for international banking, money exchange, and other financial industries. Last, Singapore has developed its own export

industries: electronics, computer components, and other high-tech items have contributed substantially to Singapore's economic growth in recent years. By 1989 Singapore became the largest producer of computer disk drives in the world.

Singapore has encouraged foreign investment by offering tax breaks and other favorable terms to companies seeking to enter the Singapore market. For example, industries that were geared to producing export items were allowed to pay one tenth the standard tax rate on profits for the first fifteen years of operation. Additionally, the efficient administration, highly developed infrastructure, and well educated work force provided additional incentives to potential foreign investors. Throughout the 1980's and into the 1990's, Singapore's workforce was rated number one by the Business Environment Risk Information (BERI) service. Singapore's long-standing status as a free trade zone, a principle held sacred from the founding days of Raffles, also appealed to foreign businesses. Collectively, these attributes have been successful in attracting many multinational companies to Singapore. In the late 1980's, foreign capital accounted for 70 per cent of investment in the manufacturing sector. By 1993 foreign investment in Singapore's manufacturing industries totaled 31.5 billion Singapore dollars.

In an effort to boost industrialization, Singapore has created some thirty industrial parks. Jurong Industrial Estate is currently the largest and most important of these centers. Created in the early 1960's, Jurong had become home to nearly 3,500 companies by 1995. In addition to industrial amenities, Jurong has been provided with nearby housing and recreational facilities including parks, Chinese and Japanese gardens, a bird park, a golf course, tennis courts, a swimming pool, and a sports stadium.

Singapore's petrochemical industry provides a convenient regional center for the processing of crude oil from Indonesia, Malaysia, and other countries. Facilities owned by companies such as Shell, Esso, Caltex, Mobil, and British Petroleum have a combined refining capacity in excess of one million barrels per day. By the late 1980's Singapore was the world's third largest petroleum refiner, as well as the third largest oil trading center. Singapore has also developed a large merchant fleet (ranked twelfth in the world) which includes over 200 oil tankers.

Singapore has become a major regional hub for financial services. It is the center for the Asian Dollar Market, an Asian version of the Eurodollar market that allows overseas deposits to be invested in various Asian corporate activities. The Singapore Foreign Exchange Market has grown rapidly to become a major center for international currency trade. Gold and financial futures are traded at the Singapore International Monetary Exchange (SIMEX), the first exchange in Asia to trade in financial futures. The Singapore Stock Exchange was started in 1973, and later became linked to the National Association of Securities Dealers (NASDAQ) in the United States to allow automated posting of price and trading information between the two exchanges. Singapore's well-developed communications networks have helped banks and other financial institutions process their transactions quickly and efficiently. For example, the System for Handling Interbank Funds Transfer (SHIFT) was established in 1985 to provide a central clearing house for recording and transferring interbank payments, while the more recent MasNet provides a network to connect banks and other financial institutions.

Singapore's top five trading partners in the mid 1990's were Malaysia (accounting for 20 per cent of Singapore's total exports), the United States, the European Union, Hong Kong, and Japan. Singapore is also a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which promotes trade within the Southeast Asian region, and the Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), a group dedicated to implementing tariff-free trade within the Asia-Pacific region by the year 2020.

Government

Singapore's government consists of a parliamentary system (similar to the British House of Commons). The members of Parliament are elected to five year terms, though the Parliament may be dissolved and new elections called before the five year period has finished. Since 1988, provisions have been included to ensure that Parliament has a multiracial representation: some constituencies are represented by groups of four members, at least one of which must come from the Malay, Indian or some other minority group. Voting is open to (and in fact compulsory for) all adults above the age of twenty-one.

Formally, the head of state is the president, who is elected every six years by the people. In reality, the president's role is largely ceremonial: in accordance with the support of Parliament he appoints the Prime Minister, who leads the actual administration of the country. However the President does have the power to veto government budgets and to appoint people to government positions.

The Prime Minister is assisted by a cabinet of ministers (fifteen as of 1997), all of whom are also members of Parliament. The Prime Minister and the Cabinet are in charge of

government policies and administration, and are held responsible to Parliament. Lee Kuan Yew held the position of Prime Minister from the country's independence until 1990, when he was succeeded by former first deputy prime minister Goh Chok Tong. As of 1997, Lee still maintained a degree of influence in government by holding the position of Senior Minister in Goh's cabinet.

Singapore's judicial system is headed by a Supreme Court, whose members are appointed by the President on the advice of the Prime Minister. Interestingly, up until 1994 appeals could be made from the Supreme Court to the Judicial Committee of Her Majesty's Privy Council in London. Since that time, however, the Singapore Supreme Court has been the final court of appeals. Cases are heard by judges: there is no trial by jury. In matters concerning matters of religion, marriage and other related issues for Singapore's Muslim community, a separate system of traditional Muslim law applies.

In 1995, the Supreme Court went hi-tech by introducing a computer network in the court. This system allows participants to share on-line information, and can digitally record oral testimony. Lawyers can now use multimedia presentations while arguing their cases, and video teleconferencing facilities allow witnesses to be seen and heard in court without being physically present.

Singapore's laws impose stiff penalties for many offenses. Dealing in drugs carries a mandatory death sentence. Littering on a public street can result in substantial on the spot fines. It is illegal to sell chewing gum. A widely publicized case of 1994 involved American teenager Michael Fay, who was caned for spray-painting cars. While some have criticized certain parts of Singapore's laws, many supporters point to Singapore's law-abiding

community, clean streets and low crime rate as evidence that the laws have achieved their intended effect.

International Relations

Singapore belongs to a number of regional associations. Perhaps most important is the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Thirty years after its founding in 1967, ASEAN had grown to include Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines, Brunei, and Vietnam. At the 1995 ASEAN meeting, the heads of state for all ten Southeast Asian countries met together for the first time. It was expected that Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar (Burma) would apply for and eventually receive full membership in ASEAN,

though political unrest and questionable records on human rights in some of these countries seemed likely to delay immediate action.

Singapore is also a member of the Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). This group of countries, which includes the United States, Australia, and many Asian nations, promotes economic development within the Asian-Pacific region. In particular, it is dedicated to removing barriers to free trade and investment in the region.

In 1996, Singapore hosted the first Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO), the successor to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) organization. One year earlier, Singapore's representative to the United Nations was elected for a one-year term as Chairman of the General Council of the WTO. Both honors indicate Singapore's international standing, especially within the realm of world trade.

Singapore is also an active member in other international bodies, including the Non-Aligned Movement, the Commonwealth, and the United Nations. Singaporean troops have been used in UN peacekeeping operations. With its export-oriented economy dependent on world trade and regional stability, Singapore seeks to be a visible presence on the international scene.

Singapore participates in a number of programs to assist other countries. Under the Singapore Cooperation Program (SCP), thousands of participants from developing countries have come to Singapore to receive training in technical fields such as health and medicine, transportation, telecommunications, and education. The Singapore Volunteers Overseas program sends Singaporeans to developing countries to provide education and technical assistance.

Security

Since 1989, Singapore has relied on a policy of "Total Defense" to maintain its national security. This policy consists of a five point program designed to unite the country and prepare all her people to participate in keeping the nation strong and safe. The five sections of the policy are:

Psychological Defense,	to assure that Singaporeans are committed to defend their country
Social Defense,	to promote a strong and unified society by breaking down racial and ethnic barriers
Economic Defense,	to provide a sound and balanced economy that can sustain the disruptions of war or other emergencies
Civil Defense,	to train the civilian population to be able to respond to emergencies
Military Defense,	to maintain the Singapore Armed Forces in an operationally ready state to protect Singapore's peace and security.

The Total Defense policy highlights Singapore's commitment to involving all layers of society in maintaining the security of the country. As a small nation, Singapore is vulnerable to outside aggression: as such, the country seeks to promote a sense of awareness among all her people that peace and defense cannot be taken for granted. Everyone is expected to contribute to the safety of the country.

All able bodied Singaporean men are required at age eighteen years to serve for two or two and one half years of military service. After this full-time service, enlisted men are put on reserve status, under which they are recalled for military training for several weeks each year.

Urban Development

When Raffles landed at Singapore, most of the island was still covered in forest. Today only a few small pockets of relatively untouched nature survive in reserves and water catchment areas. Urban growth has dramatically changed the physical characteristics of the island. The main city of Singapore has expanded outwards and new residential and commercial estates have spread over much of the rest of the island.

To address the housing shortage which existed during the early days of independence, the Singapore Housing and Development Board (HDB) began a massive construction effort to build new high-rise housing developments in many of the old areas of town that had fallen into disrepair or degenerated into slums. Additionally, new residential areas were created in the less developed parts of the island. These new towns also featured HDB high-rise apartment blocks, and were often also equipped with their own schools, sports facilities, and shopping areas. Many residents continue to work in the main city of Singapore itself. An efficient public transport system helped reduce traffic to and from the city. Commuters have the option of bus connections or the new Mass Rapid Transport (MRT) subway system.

The HDB housing blocks provide a relatively low cost option to apartment renters. The government also encourages residents to buy their HDB apartments. Grants exist to help first time apartment owners and low-income renters to buy their own HDB units. Singapore has a comparatively high rate of home ownership. As of 1997, approximately 80% of the population were owners of HDB housing units.

As Singapore's population and manufacturing sector continue to expand, Singapore faces a shortage of land. The main island is just 26 miles wide from east to west, and 14

miles from north to south. For many years the Singapore government has tackled this problem by actually "making" more land. Government land reclamation efforts have created well over 6,000 acres of usable land from filling in swamps and extending land further out to sea. Many changes have been made to the shape of the coastline in Singapore's central harbor district, the industrial port areas to the west and the Changi area to the east. Planners in the early 1990's estimated that Singapore's total land area could be enlarged as much as fifteen per cent if reclamation efforts on Singapore island and the lesser islands were implemented to the maximum extent possible.

Education

Singapore's educational system is based upon the British model. Within this system, students normally take a comprehensive set of "O" level examinations (the Cambridge General Certificate of Education 'Ordinary' level exams) after four years of secondary school, and then take a set of "A" level examinations after two more years of study to qualify for university entrance.

Primary students in Singapore study English and a mother tongue (Mandarin, Tamil or Malay), as well as mathematics, science, art, physical education and moral education. Students are "streamed" at the end of their fourth year of primary school according to their academic abilities. Upon entering secondary school, students are again "streamed" into the Normal, Special, or Express courses. The Normal stream is further subdivided into an academic and a technical curricula. Those who do not excel in traditional academics are given vocationally-oriented training.

Public education is not completely free: parents pay for school books and uniforms. Nominal monthly charges are also paid at the secondary level (primary school tuition is free). However, there are grants available to allow poor students to attend school, so that no one is denied an education for economic reasons.

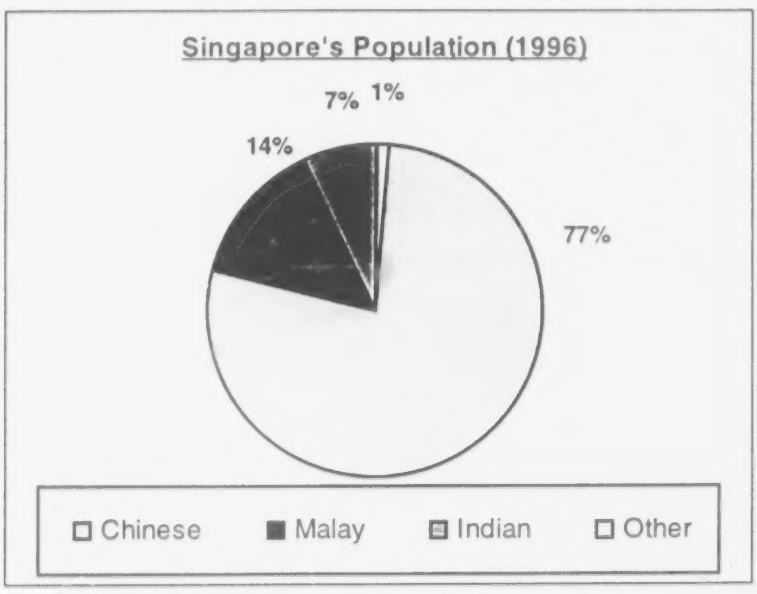
Singapore has excellent colleges and universities, including the National University of Singapore (NUS); Nanyang Technological University; and the Singapore, Ngee Ann, Temasek, and Nanyang Polytechnics (polytechnics concentrate on providing training in science, engineering, business, and other fields in the commercial and industrial sector). The Institute of Technical Education provides a number of technical programs for school leavers and those who are already employed, including numerous opportunities for workers to improve their skills and upgrade their education.

Singapore has a high rate of literacy (about 91 per cent of those aged 15 and over in the mid 1990's). Most Singaporean families place a high value on education, and children are expected to excel in order to secure a good future career. Between 1980 and 1995 the number of students enrolled in universities and polytechnics trebled as higher education became an increasingly common requirement for many jobs.

People

By the mid 1990's, Singapore's population had risen to 3 million. Over three quarters of Singapore's citizens are of Chinese ancestry, most of which belong to the Hokkien, Teochew, Cantonese, and Hakka dialect groups. The two largest non-Chinese groups are the

Malays and the Indians. Smaller groups of residents include Eurasians, Westerners, and others.



According to the 1990 census, just over half the adult population of Singapore claimed adherence to Buddhism and/or Taoism, almost all of these being Chinese. Most of the island's Christian population was also Chinese. The Malay population is overwhelmingly Muslim, while the Indian community has Hindu, Muslim, and some Christian followers.

Singapore has openly embraced the cultural diversity of its people, and many colorful festivals are celebrated throughout the year. Perhaps the largest festival is Chinese New Year, which is accompanied in Singapore by a "Chingay" Procession featuring a variety of cosmopolitan performances. Chinese New Year is a time to reunite with family. Red "hong bao" packets of money are distributed to a family's unmarried children by parents and other

relatives. Traditionally, the new year is ushered in by lighting firecrackers to scare away evil spirits, but this practice has been banned in Singapore due to the possibility of accidents and injuries.

Head of a Chinese Dragon costume used in Chinese New Year celebrations.

The Chinese also celebrate the Mid-Autumn Festival, sometimes also called the Mooncake or Lantern Festival. The mooncakes may be filled with beanpaste, egg yolks, lotus seeds, nuts, and/or fruit, and are bought for the fifteenth day of the eighth lunar month. Brightly colored paper or cellophane lanterns are also bought and carried about by children.

The Chinese community also observes the Qing Ming festival to honor their ancestors, and the Yu Lan Jie (Hungry Ghost) Festival, in which offerings of food and paper money are made to the spirits of the deceased who return to earth during the seventh lunar month. Other Chinese celebrations include the Dragon Boat Festival, which now features international teams racing long "dragon" boats, each filled with about twenty rowers and one drummer to set the rhythm of the strokes.

Typical Malay celebrations revolve around important Islamic religious events. Hari Raya Haji celebrates those who undergo the Haj (pilgrimage) to Mecca, and often includes the sacrifice of a goat. Perhaps even more important is the Hari Raya Puasa, or Aidil Fitri, which marks the end of the one month long fasting period during which adults may not eat, smoke, or drink from sun-up to sun-down. To celebrate the end of the fasting month, people return home to visit family and ask forgiveness for any wrongdoing of the past year. Neighbors, friends, and relatives drop by for visits, and children dress up in new clothes. During the festivities many special foods are prepared, such as the traditional *ketupat*, a square rice cake wrapped in a covering of woven coconut leaves.

Indian festivals include Thaipusam, an occasion for giving thanks for favors received and penance for wrongs committed. The holiday is dedicated to Lord Subramaniam, protector of the gods. The highlight of the ceremony is a two-mile procession in which men walk

wearing a *kavadi* (heavy steel framework decorated with flowers and pictures of the gods), which is supported by spikes and hooks attached directly to their bare flesh. Devotees may also pierce their cheeks or tongue with metal skewers.

Deepavali, or the Festival of Lights, commemorates Lord Krisna's victory over Kamsa, and represents the triumph of good over evil and light over darkness. Tiny oil lamps fashioned out of clay are lit and placed all around the house. On the morning of Deepavali, family members begin the day with purification and prayer, and then dress in new clothes, prepare special foods, and invite friends and relatives for a meal. A *kolam* (elaborate pattern drawn with the fingers on the floor) may also be drawn by the women of the family.

Looking to the Future

Singapore's people have a rich and varied history. Traditions from each of the major ethnic groups are kept alive and celebrated, even as the people strive to define a unique "Singaporean" identity. The strong work ethic, emphasis on education, and rich cultural legacy of Singapore's people have helped the country become one of the best "success stories" in Asia. Singapore's continued progress and prosperity will undoubtedly rely on these same values.

Timeline of Important Events

1945 - 1946	Singapore under control of British Military Administration.
1948	Federation of Malaya formed from Malay peninsular states.
1953	Rendel Commission created. Recommends election of a new Legislative Assembly in Singapore.
1955	Elections held: Labor Front leads new government coalition under Chief Minister David Marshall.
1956	Marshall resigns after talks with British fail to produce agreement on full independence for Singapore. Lim Yew Hock takes over as Chief Minister.
1957	Britain agrees to new constitution granting Singapore domestic self-rule, with continued British influence in matters of security and defense.
1959	Lee Kuan Yew leads Peoples Action Party to victory under first elections held under the new constitution.
1961	Lee Kuan Yew and Malaysian Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman discuss possibility of uniting Malaya and Singapore.
1963	Singapore, Sabah, Sarawak, and Malaya join to form new country of Malaysia.
1965	Singapore asked to leave Malaysia: becomes independent country.
1967	Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and the Philippines jointly create the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).
1968	British announce plans to completely withdraw all remaining military forces from Singapore.
1973	Singapore Stock Exchange opened.
1989	Singapore becomes world's largest producer of computer hard drives: economy continues to stress hi-tech industries.
1990	Lee Kuan Yew steps down as Prime Minister: succeeded by Goh Chok Tong.
1996	Singapore dubbed "world's most competitive economy" by World Economic Forum in Geneva.

Exercises

I Multiple Choice

Beside each question, write the letter of the option that provides the best answer.

1) __ In the months immediately after WWII, Singapore was administered:

a) as part of the new Malayan union
b) by the British Military Administration
c) by the Malayan Communist Party
d) as an independent country

2) David Marshall was leader of the:

a) Peoples' Action Party
b) Malayan Communist Party
c) Labor Front
d) Straits Settlements Association

3) Singapore's first Chief Minister was:

a) Lee Kuan Yew
b) Lim Yew Hock
c) Sir George Rendel
d) David Marshall

4) In 1963, all of the following former British colonial territories joined to form the country of Malaysia **except**:

a) Singapore
b) Brunei
c) Federation of Malaya
d) Sarawak

5) ASEAN was formed:

a) while Singapore was still part of Malaysia
b) after Indonesia ended its confrontation policy against Malaysia
c) while Lim Yew Hock was serving as Chief Minister
d) before Lee Kuan Yew became leader of the Peoples Action Party

6) The Housing and Development Board has done all the following **except**:

a) try to ensure a mix of ethnicities in government-sponsored housing blocks
b) encourage occupants to buy their HDB apartments
c) construct large numbers of HDB housing units
d) raise rents to encourage tenants to move out of crowded HDB housing blocks

7) In modern Singapore the ethnic group that accounts for more than 75% of the population is the:

a) Indian
b) Malay
c) Chinese
d) Eurasian

8) Singapore's government is best described as a:

a) parliamentary system
b) monarchy
c) federation of states
d) religious oligarchy

9) Singapore's economy has:

a) included the export of electronics, computer components and other hi-tech items
b) been largely dependent on international trade
c) attracted many foreign businesses
d) all of the above

10) Singapore's legal system:

a) requires trial by jury for all cases
b) has no court of appeals
c) allows separate systems of traditional religious law for Hindus
d) allows separate systems of traditional religious law for Muslims

II Matching Terms

Write the name of the ethnic group that is most closely associated with the following festivals. Identify the groups as Malay, Indian, or Chinese (write only one group per festival: however, one ethnic group may be matched with more than one festival).

1) _____ Deepavali

2) _____ Mooncake Festival

3) _____ Hari Raya Puasa

4) _____ Thaipusam

5) _____ Hungry Ghost Festival

III Short Essay Questions

1) Describe the role of international trade in Singapore's economy.

2) Discuss the problems that may arise in uniting an ethnically, religiously, and linguistically diverse population. How has Singapore tried to accommodate its different ethnic groups?

3) Singapore's educational system uses "streaming" to divide students into different classes. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of "streaming" students.

IV Topics for Debate

Form teams to argue for or against each of the following statements.

1) "The use of English in Singapore's government and school system is a relic of colonialism that has no relevance for a modern, independent Asian country: a new language policy should be chosen."

2) Singapore requires all young men to undergo military service. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of such a policy. Should compulsory military service exist in this country?

3) Singaporean law respects traditional custom and religious law for its Muslim community in matters regarding religion, marriage, and other matters. Is this fair to everyone in the country? Should similar recognition be extended to other religious groups?

V For Further Research

Consult several other resources in your library to gain more background on one of the following issues. Then present a short written or oral report that summarizes your research.

1) What were the major issues regarding the merger of Singapore with Malaysia? Why did Singapore leave Malaysia?

2) Why did Indonesia adopt a policy of confrontation against Malaysia? How did this affect Singapore?

3) How does Singapore's economy compare with those of its Asian neighbors?

4) Discuss the political career of Lee Kuan Yew.

5) What is the purpose of ASEAN? What are its major achievements?

6) Pick one of the ethnic or religious festivals mentioned in chapter three for further research. How did the festival originate, and how is it now celebrated?

7) Describe the "Emergency" in Malaya during the decade following WWII. How might it have influenced Malaysia's later relations with Singapore, especially during the years when there were many Communist supporters within Singapore's Peoples' Action Party?

8) Outline the purpose and accomplishments of APEC.

9) Describe the political career of David Marshall.

10) What are the official and national language(s) of Singapore? How have language issues been dealt with by Singapore's government?

VI Creative Writing

1) You are Lee Kuan Yew, and you have just received word from the Malaysian Prime Minister that Singapore must leave the Malaysian union. Draft a speech to the people of Singapore informing them of this event and outlining the challenges and opportunities that face the tiny island of Singapore as a newly independent country.

2) You are a marketing executive who has been commissioned by the Singapore government to promote more foreign investment and trade to the country. Design an advertisement (or write a script and "storyboards" for a video commercial) for this purpose. Be sure to include all the economic advantages that Singapore has to offer.

Key to Exercises:

Chapter One

I Multiple Choice:

1) b According to legend, the Sumatran prince Parameswara stayed in Singapore for several years before founding the city of: [Malacca]

2) d Singapore has been called all of the following **except**: [Salang]

3) c The first European powers to take control of Malacca were the: [Portuguese]

4) b Raffles established a British trading post at Singapore: [after Raffles had served as Lieutenant-Governor of Java]

5) d From 1819 to 1823 the British representative living in Singapore who was responsible for the day-to-day administration of the town was: [Farquhar]

6) c The Straits Settlements consisted of: [Singapore, Malacca, and Penang]

7) d Which of the following groups did **not** play a direct, significant role in developments on the Malay peninsula? [the Spanish]

8) b Which of the following was a significant problem during Singapore's early years? [continued problems with nearby piracy]

9) c The keenest supporter of higher education in early Singapore (and the founder of the Singapore Institution) was: [Raffles]

10) c Raffles designated separate areas of the city for all of the following ethnic groups **except**: [the Thai]

II True or False:

1) F During the fifteenth century, Singapore was a much more important center of trade than Malacca

2) T After the Portugues captured Malacca in 1511, the royal family fled to the Riau/Johore area.

3) T The chance to obtain spices was a major factor prompting Portuguese interest in the trade that passed through the Straits of Malacca.

4) F After the defeat of the Portuguese, the British were the only European power to maintain a presence in Malacca and the rest of the Malay peninsula.

5) F The Bugis were traders who often visited Malay ports, but never got involved in Malay politics.

6) T After obtaining rights to Singapore in 1819, Raffles spent more time at the British outpost of Bencoolen than he did in Singapore.

7) T A major factor in Singapore's success was its status as a tax-free trading port.

8) T Pepper and gambier were two of the main local agricultural products to be cultivated in Singapore during the early years of the British administration.

9) F Britain retained a large share of the profitable trade flowing through Singapore by banning all other European powers from using the port.

10) F Despite Singapore's commercial success, the small size of the island limited population growth to only a few thousand during the first three decades of British rule.

III Geography Knowledge

Fill in the name of each place next to its description below. Then write the corresponding number from each of the following descriptions at its correct position on the map below.

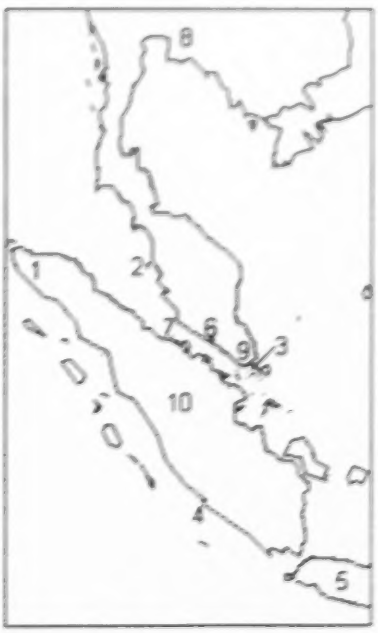
1) Aceh — The area in north Sumatra where Raffles had originally intended to go in 1811 to negotiate a treaty for a possible British settlement.

2) Penang — The place where both Raffles and Crawfurd had their first overseas posting.

3) Singapore — The place whose name means "Lion City."

4) Bencoolen — The Sumatran port from which Raffles also oversaw the early development of Singapore.

5) Java — The island which Raffles administered as Lt.-Governor from 1811-1815.



6) Malacca — The city that legend states was founded by Parameswara: later to be controlled in succession by the Portuguese, Dutch, and British.

7) Straits of Malacca — The waterway which provided a major thoroughfare for international trade flowing through Sotheast Asia: named after one of the important trading ports on the Malay coast.

8) Thailand — The country then known as Siam.

9) Johore — The area at the tip of the Malay peninsula which was ruled by the former royal family of Malacca: Mahmud was one of its Sultans.

10) Sumatra — The island that was the original homeland of the Minangkabau: also home to the ancient Srivijayan capital of Palembang.

Chapter Two

I Multiple Choice

1) c By the time the Straits Settlements had become a crown colony, which of the following two exports from the Malay peninsula provided Singapore with the most income?
[tin and rubber]

2) c When they were made a crown colony in 1867, the Straits Settlements were put under direct control of [the Colonial Office]

3) d The majority of the new workers who arrived to work in the Malaysian tin mines were: [Chinese]

4) a The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 [encouraged the increased use of steamships]

5) d The Straits Chinese (also known as the Baba community) consisted of people whose heritage was primarily a mixture of Chinese and: [Malay]

6) c By the time of the creation of the Straits Settlements the largest ethnic group in Singapore was the [Chinese]

7) c As the first British official in Singapore who was fluent in a Chinese dialect, William Pickering was appointed in 1877 as the: [Chinese Protector]

8) d The short-lived mutiny in Singapore during WWI involved troops who were mainly: [Indian]

9) c The main reason why Singapore was vulnerable to Japanese attack during WWII was: [the lack of military ships and aircraft]

10) c While Singapore was under Japanese administration, the Japanese did all of the following **except**: [jail all Malay troops]

II Matching Definitions

Write the letter identifying the correct description for each of the people listed below.

1) C Arthur Percival	A) Sultan of Johore and descendent of Temenggong of Singapore
2) D Aw Boon Haw	B) Commander of the army that captured Singapore and renamed the city Syonan
3) E William Pickering	C) One of the military officers responsible for the defense of Singapore in 1941
4) A Abu Bakar	D) Founder of a major Chinese-language newspaper and the Tiger Balm brand of ointments
5) B Tomoyuki Yamashita	E) First "Chinese Protector" of Singapore

III Fill in the Blanks

1) **Sun Yat Sen** often travelled to Singapore in the early 1900's seeking support for his plans for revolution in China.

2) The Jawi-Peranakan community of Singapore primarily consisted of people with mixed Indian and **Malay** ancestry.

3) The rapid rise in the popularity of the automobile lead to increased world-wide demand for **rubber**, which became a major export for Malaya.

4) During their offense down the Malay peninsula to Singapore, many of the Japanese infantry relied on **bicycles** to provide them with a cheap, simple way to travel more quickly.

5) **Malay** was widely used by Singapore's Muslim community and others in Southeast Asia as a "lingua franca."

Chapter Three

I Multiple Choice

1) b In the months immediately after WWII, Singapore was administered: [by the British Military Administration]

2) c David Marshall was leader of: [Labor Front]

3) d Singapore's first Chief Minister was: [David Marshall]

4) b In 1963, all of the following former British colonial territories joined to form the country of Malaysia **except**: [Brunei]

5) b ASEAN was formed: [after Indonesia ended its confrontation policy against Malaysia]

6) d The Housing and Development Board has done all the following **except**: [raise rents of tenants to encourage them to move out of crowded HDB housing blocks]

7) c In modern Singapore the ethnic group that accounts for more than 75% of the population is the: [Chinese]

8) a Singapore's government is best described as a: [parliamentary system]

9) d Singapore's economy has: [all of the above]

10) d Singapore's legal system: [allows separate systems of traditional religious law for Muslims]

II Matching Terms

1) Indian _____ Deepavali

2) Chinese _____ Mooncake Festival

3) Malay (Muslim) Hari Raya Puasa

4) Indian _____ Thaipusam

5) Chinese _____ Hungry Ghost Festival

Bibliography

Andaya, B.W. & Andaya, L.K. 1982. A History of Malaysia. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Barber, N. 1978, The Singapore Story. Glasgow: Fontana/Collins.

Bastin, J. (Ed.). 1994. Travellers' Singapore: An Anthology. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press.

Chew, E.C.T. & Lee, E. (Eds.). 1991. A History of Singapore. Singapore: Oxford University Press.

Dutton, G. 1981. Impressions of Singapore. Singapore: Times Books International.

George, F. J. 1992. Successful Singapore. Singapore: S.S. Mubaruk & Brothers Pte Ltd.

Hall, D.G.E. 1981. A History of South-East Asia. (4th ed.), New York: St. Martin's Press.

Layton, L. 1992. Cultures of the World: Singapore. New York: Marshall Cavendish Corporation.

LePoer, B.L. (Ed.) 1991. Singapore: A Country Study. 2nd edition, Area Handbook Series. Washington DC. U.S. Government Printing Office.

Moore, D. & Moore, J. 1969. The First 150 Years of Singapore. Singapore: Donald Moore Press Ltd.

Ryan, N.J. 1976. A History of Malaysia and Singapore. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press.

Sheppard, M. (Ed.). 1973. 150th Anniversary of the Founding of Singapore. Reprint no. 1 of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society (previously published as JMBRAS Volume XLII, Part I, 1969). Singapore: Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.

Singapore 1995. 1995. Singapore: Ministry of Information and the Arts.

Singapore: The Next Lap. 1991. Singapore: The Government of Singapore (with Times Editions, Pte Ltd).

Steinberg, D. (Ed.). 1987. In Search of Southeast Asia. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Tan D. E. 1978, A Portrait of Malaysia and Singapore. Singapore: Oxford University Press.

Turnbull, C.M. 1989. A History of Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei. Sydney: Allen & Unwin.

Turnbull, C.M. 1989. A History of Singapore 1819-1988. Singapore: Oxford University Press.

Wilson, D. 1975, East Meets West: Singapore. (2nd ed.). Singapore: Times Printers.

Wise, M. (Ed.).1985. Travellers' Tales of Old Singapore. Singapore: Times Books International.

Yeo S.C. 1984. Singapore Memento. Singapore: FEP International Pte Ltd.